PHILOSOPHY

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PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

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1. Since the beginnings of philosophy, in all cultures which have produced any, religion and philosophy have been closely tied up together, and have often been uneasy yoke-fellows, each at times feeling it a duty to combat the other. I think there are two main reasons for this. (*a*) All higher religions develop a theology, or systematic statement of doctrine; the philosopher tends to regard this as a spurious kind of philosophy or science that deliberately neglects inconvenient facts; while the theologian in his turn suspects the philosopher of ignoring important data which he ought to consider, viz.: the phenomena of concrete religion. (*b*) Akin to this is the tendency of both parties to use the word "God" in a different sense; Pascal's objection that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is not the God of the philosophers is prima facie justified. Nevertheless both parties might have a claim to use the word.

2. Philosophy is continuous with science. This is of course true in the historical sense that the sciences have been specialized out of it—so that some regard it as a relic which might now well be abandoned. But the better opinion I think is, that philosophy to-day is continuous with the theoretical aspects of the sciences; it proceeds in the same sort of manner and no clear line can be drawn between questions of scientific theory and philosophical questions. It is generally considered that philosophy works by syntactical and semantical reasoning, following out the mutual implications of propositions and investigating the manner in which the concepts used refer to immediate experience. The philosopher does not experiment in the narrower sense of the word; he theorizes about the tentative results and methods of the science, law, history and other less specialized modes of experience of his time, with a view to working out a consistent set

of propositions that will "fit" this variety of experience as well as possible. In an indirect manner *his* theories also are confirmed, or on the contrary rendered uninteresting, according as they help or fail to help in fitting a conceptual frame of explanation to experience. It is now well recognized, I believe, that theories are fitted to experience as a whole; no theory can be invalidated or confirmed with logical necessity by a single experience, but theories are decisively modified by particular experiences and grow gradually towards certainty. If the word "science" be taken in a wide enough sense, one may accept the definition of some logical-empiricists that philosophy is "unified science." To such unification, the studies at present so fashionable relating to the usage of key words in different contexts or to the types of logical relation can greatly contribute.

3. One good feature of the present philosophical fashions in this country at the present time, as compared with those prevalent a generation ago, is the willingness to take each science and also the conceptions of common sense seriously—not to override them as self-contradictory in a cavalier manner, as did the dogmatic Idealists, Materialists and Sensationists, but to investigate how these "different languages" or views of reality may be reconciled. Where a system of concepts has been developed over a long time to cover a certain sector of life, it should be treated by the philosopher with certain respect. *This principle applies* prima facie *to theology also.*

4. Useful as particular logical studies may be, they are by no means the whole of philosophy. Philosophy is concerned primarily with the unity and order which is to be found in the world. (Logicians please note that this is both an historical statement and a recommendation for the future usage of the word "philosophy".) There are three kinds or levels of unity and order which have been noted by, and will probably continue to interest, philosophers:

(*a*) *The immediate unity of fact-and-value.* Each of us experiences himself immediately as one small item in one world of things and persons exerting claims and attractions upon him—a world going indefinitely beyond anything we can ever attend to. We are acting-observers and observing-actors, adapted to our environment to a certain extent, having to abandon ourselves much of the time to a "common sense" and "instinct" which does not work too badly. (This is the kind of unity emphasized, e.g. by Bergson and Heidegger.)

(*b*) *Natural laws, specific life-cycles, moral principles.* As our life goes forward, this world proves to be full of patches of unity and order—natural regularities and accepted regular modes of co-operation between living beings. They are no more than patches; there is plenty of the disorderly and the unintelligible also. But because of these patches, our world proves well adapted to be understood and to be acted on purposively.

(c) *Working postulates.* Both for intellectual research and for practical life in society, we postulate a unity greater than we actually find. The scientist works on the assumption that there is no limit set to the linking-up of particular laws of nature. And the moral man also—like the judge in his own sphere of the state law—postulates that there must be a solution satisfactory to all concerned in every conflict of interests or obligations, if only he could find it; he may not give up the search. These postulates seem to "work" and seem indispensable. (This is perhaps the basic feature of Kant's philosophy.)

It is not the mere regular repetitions of "the same" event, but the hierarchy of the different levels of order that is so remarkable, and which makes the hierarchy of the sciences possible.

5. (One must, I suppose, nowadays refer to the current objection that all apparent order in the world is just the result of the language in which we talk about it. But language has been made to enable human beings to communicate about actual situations; in the reflective mode of discourse which philosophy uses, we speak indirectly about innumerable actual situations. If we use language carefully, the similarities and dissimilarities of immediate experience impose themselves upon us.)

6. If for convenience we label man's activities of understanding and deliberate action his "spiritual" activities (this word has dangerous associations, but "intellectual" and "mental" are worse), we must admit a strong tendency among philosophers of all ages and cultures to conceive the unity of the world as *akin to the spiritual.* We find much in the world that is disorderly and bad; but it has seemed to thinkers on the whole more intellectually satisfactory to regard the disorderly as manifestation of a degraded or ineffectual order, rather than to regard the partial order as a chance product of the chaotic. (On some such principle as *causa aequat effectum.*) There has been a not negligible minority from Democritus to Darwin, and similarly in other cultures, which has taken the contrary view; but the majority in favour of the former view has been very impressive. The general consensus of philosophers has been to consider the aspects of unity in the universe as a spiritual unity whose manifestation is *either limited or veiled.*

7. Philosophers in the West have often been inclined to adopt the word "God" from concrete religion to designate this supposed underlying quasi-spiritual unity. This usage may be extremely misleading, or it may be indicative of something important. For most philosophers, however, the word "God" refers for its meaning ultimately to various features of man's perceptual, logical, aesthetic and moral experience, and not to anything specifically connected with the concrete religions. It is conceivable that the word "God" as used by

philosophers and by religious devotees might have *only* a certain *emotional tone* in common. The kind of inter-science problems dealt with by philosophers, such as the applicability of mathematics to stars and tones, the nature of life and mentality, the nature of law and morality, do in fact arouse in most people a wonder akin to religious awe. This may be important. But *prima facie* the philosopher should not expect the religious to mean by the word "God" what he, the philosopher, might think it ought to mean.

8. Concrete religions exist, on a large scale. Though much religion is meaningless repetition of dead forms, much is apparently alive and influences men. Philosophers are always in danger of misdescribing concrete religion, or of ignoring its existence. To consider it merely as a set of social customs is manifestly inadequate, for it is of the essence of all religions that they claim to give a kind of knowledge and to be within the sphere of the true and false. Religion manifests itself indeed in a bewildering variety of forms; but it has not proved impossible to find some order in these; I think it is not more difficult than to find some order in art-styles, and a task no less worthy of philosophical endeavour.

9. Every observer has been led to make a distinction between "higher" and "lower" forms of religion, in spite of difficulties in deciding just where to draw the line or what criteria to employ. I think the principal criterion has been: "higher" religions recognize one supreme Being, or particular divine beings as manifestations of a One. The existence of such religions involves contact and possibly tension with philosophy because of its search for unity. It is in my judgment idle to enquire how far "higher" religion is due to philosophy or vice versa; in earlier ages human beings did not accept such a departmentalizing of their lives as most of us do now.

10. All religion recognizes special sources of knowledge, which may be labelled with the Christian term "revelation." All higher religion produces theology, a kind of "science" which theorizes upon these special data—data which are not admitted by science in the ordinary modern sense of the term. All theology is necessarily rationalistic in its methods; the existence of theology is one of the great sources of contact and tension with philosophy (the other sources of tension being emotional and social-political). Theology is directed towards rationally harmonizing the various statements made by the "revelatory" persons and writings. In doing this, it inevitably proceeds by the same sort of logical method as philosophy and theoretical science. Like these, its statements are *indirectly* about some immediate experience—whether exclusively that of the one Founder, or that of a number of prophets, diviners, mystics who are considered to have immediate knowledge of God. (Perhaps as a rule, though they are not always clear on the point, theologians allow *some*

possibility of confirmation of their statements in the experience of persons other than the Founder.)

11. Science and philosophy are able to talk rationally and inter-subjectively about "blue," "round" and "heavy," although in one sense these words signify *indescribable* individual experiences: such ineffable sense-experiences can as a matter of fact be used to check the theoretical reasonings in a roundabout manner, as evidence for or against the truth of a statement made in a certain context. Nor is there any impossibility in talking rationally and inter-subjectively about matters not given through the "five senses," such as dreams or feelings of obligation. It is certain that nothing in a dream looks just like anything we see in waking life, yet we are able to describe dreams, and these descriptions have been gradually refined by psychoanalysts who theorize about dreams. (The checking of psycho-analytic theory is certainly full of pitfalls, but few would assert that it has not been confirmed at all or that it will not be further corrected by checking against experience.) Even if there is a factor of the ineffable about "religious experience," it is not absurd to suppose that we can somehow make statements referring to it. But before proceeding to the crucial question of verification, there are two preliminary points which might well be considered.

12. Theology *in principle* does not try to make its theories derived from its special "revelatory" data square with the findings of other fields of experience. For example, it does not usually consider how its miracles might be fitted in with the accepted theories of natural science. And it might fairly claim that this is rather a task for the philosopher. But I think in practice it often tends to base its theories on the scientific conceptions *of a certain classical period*, e.g.: Catholic Christian theology on the principle "Anything that is moved must be moved by something else," now abandoned by science. Also in practice it tends to neglect data which are *prima facie* relevant to its theories, viz.: those of other religious traditions. The philosopher may properly call attention to these features of current theological theory.

13. It is sometimes suggested that since God is infinite, theology may admit as many contradictions as it pleases. Certainly there is a "dialectical" element in all theoretical science; experience may *for a while* be most adequately expressed by means of contradictory conceptions, e.g.: a particle which is also a wave, a species which seeks to maintain itself yet is indefinitely fluid. In a similar manner theology may assert that X is perfect God and perfect man, or that A is God, B is God, C is God, they are all distinct and yet there is only one God. But on the whole theology cannot avoid using rational consistency as its chief instrument of truth; if the Founder has apparently enunciated two inconsistent doctrines in two sayings, it makes a persistent effort to reconcile these. It should take pro-

visional contradictions as setting a task to explain more perfectly what is meant. It is of course conceivable that theology can never dispense with some ultimate contradictions; if this is so, it is what we mean by calling the ultimate Unity "transcendent." Contradictions may also have a practical usefulness in religion for stimulating contemplation, as is claimed by Mahayana Buddhism. But if theology claims truth, it should get on without contradictions as long as it can. For our belief in an ultimate Unity depends on our belief that there is an immanent rational order to be found.

14. We can now approach the question of verification. The demand sometimes made that we should be able to specify the "cash-value" in terms of immediate experience of any statement about God is quite unreasonable. All sciences assume that many true statements for which no direct translation into terms of observation-statements is possible can be derived by deduction from the basic propositions of the theory; it is only at certain points that the theory as a whole can be checked. Nevertheless theory, unless it does suggest many such points, unless it is anchored at many points to immediate experience, is liable to go further and further astray. "A statement only becomes void if it is *logically* precluded, by the rules of use of the words involved, that anyone should ever under any conditions establish its truth or falsity beyond reasonable doubt."[1] Theological statements may be true even though hard to verify. Nevertheless, within the limits indicated, the demand for verification is reasonable.

15. It is basic for higher religion that God is invisible, inaudible and intangible in the literal sense of these words. It has been said that God is "met with" just as other persons are; but they are not invisible and intangible; if God is met with as one person among others, it is reasonable to ask questions about the delimitation of experiences of God from those of other persons.

16. God might be known through *specific effects* in sense-experience, e.g. through prayers for rain producing rain or prayers for victory producing victory. This is on the whole the theory of Judaeo-Christian theology. Any such theory forces theology, if it wishes to be rational, to take some account of natural science and offer some criteria for distinguishing which effects are to be attributed to God. I think the theoretical difficulties of such a view are insuperable, and the moral objections to it are very great. In particular the view that God takes sides with one State against another has been responsible for the devastating character of the recent "wars for righteousness," as Butterfield has called them.[2]

17. Another possibility is that the invisible God might be known not through sense-perception nor, strictly speaking, through thought,

[1] S. Hampshire in *Mind*, No. 234, p. 247.

[2] H. Butterfield: *Christianity and History*.

but through images, through the interpretative activity of man working upon sense-data. On this view a religious man is necessarily "imaginative," though perhaps in a wide sense. This view is not altogether absent from Western theology—e.g. Paul's description of Jesus as "the image of the invisible God." It involves, however, problems which are as yet little understood—there is, so far as I know, no up-to-date monograph on the imagination, at least in English—so that the following suggestions are problematic rather than conclusive. Do images sometimes confirm thought (as Lord Russell suggests in *Analysis of Mind*, p. 212); do they suggest thought; or are they merely casual and *superfluous* accompaniments of thought? The latter view, so often assumed, seems hardly in accord with our general working assumptions about the functioning of mind and body.

18. The word "image" in ordinary usage means three different things: a copy; a work of art, usually of plastic art; an immediate experience of a particular kind, such as a "memory image," a "dream-image." The first sense is obviously irrelevant to religion; no one can copy invisible beings. As for the second sense, a good statue of a person is certainly not a copy of his appearance at any one moment; what then makes a statue of the Virgin or the Buddha a good statue in the religious, not merely in the technical, sense?

19. "Image" in the third sense is probably a philosophical, not a common-sense usage; but long experience shows that a term of this sort is needed. I think it may now confidently be said that images in this sense are not, as Hume thought, weak copies of past perceptions; there are *many* respects in which they differ from perceptions. I suggest provisionally that they are *products of latent knowledge, stimulated by emotion, working upon some material basis, "inward" or "outward," which the mind finds appropriate as a vehicle for setting forth its latent knowledge in pictorial form.* There is clearly a connection between mental images and works of art. As Sartre has well shown, there is no difference in principle between seeing the portrait of a friend in the blotches of pigment on paper which constitute a picture; seeing a character in the gestures of an actor; seeing a character in the words of a good novelist; seeing pictures in clouds, flames, or "Rorschach"[1] blots; and seeing a dream-image in the play of light on my closed eyes or of dim sensations in my guts; these types, and many more, shade into one another by imperceptible degrees.

20. Sartre has, I believe, further shown that we know the objects given in "imaging" experience to be "unreal" in the sense of perceptual reality; we immediately know that Hamlet or Hermes or the scene we are remembering are not real in *that* particular sense. Furthermore, unlike perceptual objects, we do not *observe* them, to

[1] *Vide* esp. Klopfer and Kelly: *The Rorschach Technique.*

discover more about them. Finally, while neither memory-images nor imagination-images can be produced to order, they seem usually to be the response to some half-conscious "intentionality." (What Husserl call Erfüllung, Köhler "requiredness".) When the image comes, it gives an immediate impression of fitting or not fitting. In consequence we are inclined to say that it is an image "of" the man I met yesterday or "of" a chimaera. I think our dreams also give us the impression of being "of" something, though we are often not at all sure what. This "fitting" is not a matter of being able or unable to find the right *name* or concept.

21. It may be that this "requiredness" is a matter of emotion. It certainly seems possible to feel a *specific* emotion directed to something-I-know-not-what—quite a specific kind of fear or admiration which seeks an appropriate percept or image, and is satisfied when that is found. (A condition not uncommon when one first wakes up in the morning, or when one has done something silly.) However, it is well known that tasks (*Aufgaben*) which do not particularly stir the emotions go on working in us also.

22. We cannot imagine what is out of all relation to our perceptual experience; all images have a basis in "reality." But within these limits the possibilities are remarkably wide; e.g. the variety of what people "see" in a Rorschach blot is astonishing—and "seeing" is their ordinary description of the experience—apart from mentally defectives.

23. Of fundamental importance is the relationship between images and signs. Words are generally speaking signs. We think about reality through or by means of signs, as when reading an ordinary book or doing a sum. Very different are the words of poetical language; they may call up visual images, or they may be audial images which are enjoyed as satisfactory in themselves. The perceptual marks or noises which sometimes function as signs, e.g. in the call of a trumpet, may at other times form the material basis of an image, e.g. in a melody. Yet images are psychophysically effective, perhaps more so than signs.

24. The material basis of an image would seem as a rule to be in a sense *ambiguous*; the Gestalt of the perceptual basis is compelling only up to a point, so that differing interpretations can be put upon it. Such are caricatures, the performance of an actor, etc. It is for experiment to determine the range of this ambiguity; and I suppose it is the purpose of the artist to limit it as far as possible. But one can meet with eccentric interpretations of even the most skilfully executed works of art. Human behaviour also can manifestly be ambiguous, and a gesture of embarrassment be "seen" as arrogance; this may be of importance for the interpretation of historical events.

Such, in barest outline, would seem to be the main facts regarding

images, many of them, I fancy, still insufficiently explored. What bearing have they on religion?

25. Religious art exists, and the systematic study of iconography, which seeks and finds some order in the religious art of all the cultures, is possible. Divination is based on the immediate "seeing" or "hearing" of something on the basis of a natural occurrence; there are many examples in Jewish prophets, and similar stories are related of Jesus (John xii. 29) and Paul, as well as in more modern times, e.g. Brother Lawrence's account of his "seeing" God in the dead tree.[1] Music was used as material basis for divination, both by the ancient Jews and in Islam. Religious men have seen God in natural events such as storms, and in historical events such as battles; these events, however, it is now suggested, should be understood as "bases for imagery," not as "specific effects." Mystical experience exists in all the higher religions, and employs in certain of its stages images as objects of concentration. Finally, the recognition of certain individuals as incarnations of the invisible Godhead is of the essence of several higher religions—a recognition which was certainly not originally based upon logical argument. "Material" images are found in nearly all worship. The same words such as "light" and "breath" are found again and again in the most various cultures to describe the mental imagery of religious experience. It might reasonably be said that the production of religious art and the imagination of God in the decisions of life are the most obvious tests of the vitality of any religion.

26. It is possible, as suggested in para. 21 above, for the activity of the mind to be directed by a problem and/or by an emotion. (I suspect this antithesis is false, and that there is no problem without emotional tinge, nor emotion unrelated to any fact.) Now all accounts of religious experience imply that it is possible for the mind to be directed towards the ineffable and inconceivable unity which we in the West call "God," and *under this direction* to produce images, "mental" and "material." This fact is the subject of the Christian theological theorizing about the love of God and the knowledge of God; it is said that in a certain sense we can love God without knowing him, and only know him through loving him. There seems little doubt that a mind centred upon God, who is necessarily in a sense "problematic" (or better, a mystery), can find images which satisfy and are considered to represent him; such images are *not* felt to be *just accompaniments* to a process of thinking out a problem conceptually, but bring a special kind of peace. On the testimony of all religious men, worship in some sense satisfies the love of God, as well as increasing it. Such images can be formed upon the basis of liturgical words or objects, such as the Host; or again their basis may be hard to dis-

[1] Cf. A. Guillaume: *Prophecy and Divination, passim.*

cover, lying in some scarcely noticed feature of present or past experience.

27. I come now to the relation between conceptions and images in the field of religion, a relation which is evidently of some complexity. In the first place, our knowledge of images can only be through descriptions of them in conceptual terms, in a context of general outward behaviour.[1] Everyone who has ever described, or heard another describing, a mental image is aware that the conceptual description fits imperfectly, more imperfectly than does the description of perceptual objects. In the second place, religious images seem to be often based upon the traditional conceptions of the particular concrete religion; Hindus do not have visions of the Virgin Mary nor Catholics of Avalokita. But it is far from certain how far this is due to the character of the image and how far due to the available words in which to describe it; and in any case there is often a large element of the strange, surprising and novel about these images. Since our access to visions and other "mental" images is poor, we may get further through a consideration of religious art, which we have regarded as consisting of images on a material base. Now there is certainly a kind of religious art which may be called "conceptual," in which the artist sets out quite deliberately to illustrate supposed historical events or points of doctrine. It is definitely didactic. Some Gothic art as well as some Buddhist art seems to fall in this class. But this is not the case with what one may call creative religious art, which, based though it is upon some traditional idea such as the crucifixion or the last judgment, originate novel types and modes of expression. Nor do I think that the differences in type of representation, e.g. of the Christ, only express different *emotions* or emotional combinations; we are inclined to say that they represent "different conceptions of his person." But the word is clearly misleading. For though it *is* possible to illustrate conceptions didactically, in genuine creative religious art—and therefore I think we may assume in mystical experience—*the image is prior to the conceptions* in which the religious man attempts to interpret it. The traditional Christian theological theory of the discovery of truths about God by analogical reasoning is too rationalistic; it seems much truer to say that men have seen God in fire and then gone on to reason why God is like the fire, than vice versa.

28. A comparative examination of all the images used in the different religions would very likely enable us to say something about the selection of these images as appropriate rather than others. But such a task is far beyond the scope of this essay, and it has not on the

[1] Probably it is preferable to say that even our own images are only *known* to us as described to ourselves; but this is not of importance for our present purpose.

whole been the objective of theology. This, like other theoretical disciplines, has been concerned with taking the unsophisticated descriptions of immediate experience and rendering them into a consistent theory by *sharp definition* of the concepts employed (and perhaps by the *postulation of* others to link them). Thus (perhaps) out of the natural and universal images of the father, the word and the breath it has developed its sharp theoretical conception of the Persons of the Trinity—in the same sort of way as physics developed the concept of energy from the immediate indescribable feeling of pushing and being pushed about. As the process of theological theorizing goes on, and as through usage in controversy the key notions, e.g. of "incarnation," "atonement" get more sharply defined, the language available for formulating imaginative experience gets more and more restricted. Some formulae are seen to be inconsistent with others, and where there is a recognized defining authority, some formulae are condemned as heretical. It is of course necessary for the theologian to decide which are to be the *basic* propositions of the system; and this I suppose depends on what seem to them to be the most important of the images used by the Founder. But history shows that there is generally room for difference of opinion on this matter, e.g. on the centrality of the idea of the Church in the Christian tradition. Theology eliminates eccentric beliefs, but there is usually some doubt as to what is central.

29. Images are psycho-physiologically effective. They seem to be effective in a somewhat different manner from signs. Most of the day we are responding to signs, e.g. going out of our course in response to a notice: "One Way Street." A vivid mental image of an accident or a good picture of an accident may or may not bring about a change of course, but it affects us emotionally in a greater degree than words—unless the words are pictorial or onomatopoeic so that they become more than mere signs. Images, including verbal images, can be obsessive. They can certainly affect the state of the body, driving the blood to certain parts of the body, or causing vomiting, and intensifying or paralysing action. Again it seems probable, if we accept the testimony of the mystics, that images are able to promote a trance-like absorption, of which nothing can be said except anagogically, i.e. by describing the states that lead up to it. Now all agree that genuine religion is *effective*, that it is in the main practical, effecting a change in the individual and perhaps in his society.[1] (There is certainly a difference of opinion as to the place of practical works in the narrower sense; Tagore's: "You cannot really do any good until you *are* good" represents one view, Aristotle's the opposite view. But on any view religion is mainly practical, bringing about a

[1] Cf. Cromwell: "True knowledge is not outward and literal but inward and spiritual, transforming the mind to it."

certain way of life.) What then is the meaning of questions relating to the truth or falsity of its doctrines, and how is their truth related to their effectiveness? For on the face of it religious images can sometimes be obsessive, and lead to conduct generally judged to be harmful.

30. Images, it was maintained, cannot be produced at will, nor without being based on latent knowledge. They can satisfy or fail to satisfy, but I do not see how they can be true or false (except in an unusual sense, corresponding to the Greek ἀ–λήθης "undeceptive.") Truth is a property of statements made in a publicly intelligible language. Religious images perhaps may be said to contain in germ a proposition such as "God is like this," "God says something like this," but the awareness of an image is not itself an assertion. It only suggests assertions. Nor does it strictly speaking verify them. It may, and normally does, produce subjective confidence for the particular individual who has, e.g. the experience of being saved; but for the rest it only signifies that, e.g. the theological proposition "Christ is a Saviour" is *not dead*, has a "cash-value" in terms of vital effectiveness, is still interpretable in terms of imaginative experience. This, however, is important. For all history shows that theological dogmas, for all the consistency of the system, may come to seem remote and irrelevant, fail to produce religious art and fail to produce religious lives; they can continue to exist on paper as official doctrine, but get quietly and firmly rejected by the consensus of religious persons.

31. "True" then applied to a statement within this field would have a dual meaning (1) = consistent with the system of propositions which has been worked out to express as adequately as possible religious experience hitherto, (2) = effective as a basis of imaginative experience which carries with it subjective confidence. It is possible for a statement to be true in the one sense yet not in the other. Theological systematization is not useless for checking aberrations due to individual neuroses, etc., but it can also check new life. An instance suggested to me would be the Church's attempt—perhaps brought about by its experience of the female mediums it employed in the second century—to repress all doctrines of a female aspect of God.

32. On this view, the only verification possible in the case of religious statements is verification in the lives of persons, not in purely physical events such as rain. Still, the lives of persons are publicly observable. Further, I think there is good evidence that religious experience impinges on the sphere of physical events, in that it tends to produce (*a*) supernormal intuitive understanding, (*b*) powers of precognition, (*c*) powers of healing. The agreement to this effect of independent and mutually hostile religious traditions is

remarkable; and these matters should be further investigated. On this view, the Godhead is indeed all that is; but we are able to represent It only through events in the psychical field. *If* we represent God as planning or purposing, we should represent his purpose as the healing of souls.

33. It may be said that religion can take refuge in this field only because at present psychology is in a rudimentary state, its laws insufficiently known. The reply to this is that we hope psychology will in time teach us more about the causal laws governing mental aberration. But true thought and beautiful creation and good action explain themselves; it is idle to inquire for laws governing them. However much psychology we may come to know, we shall still aim to think truly, and also aim to imagine adequately. And psychical realities are also realities.

34. To return to the philosopher and theologian, if our view of their respective tasks is correct, there is need of a theology which takes account of *all* the relevant data and not only those of a certain cultural tradition. This is not really a task for the philosopher, who is not as a rule specially trained for it. Still, no one else seems likely to do it and when it is done, he cannot do his own job of trying to fit together conceptually the different departments of life.

NOTE.—The principal sources of the above are two: F. S. C. Northrop: *The Logic of the Sciences and of the Humanities*; J. P. Sartre: *L'Imaginaire.*

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THREE-VALUED ETHICS

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I

I WISH to suggest both that three (and not two) values are often used for the appraisal of moral judgments and also that there are some generally shared purposes which would be furthered if this usage became even more common. In doing this I shall by-pass two problems which have been not infrequently discussed in recent years:

(i) In reference to the appraisal of moral judgments it has been disputed whether they can properly be said to be true or false. But, if a philosopher denied the suitability of the terms "true" and "false" for the appraisal of statements like "It is our moral duty to abolish private ownership of the means of production," he did not do so with a view to substituting a trio of terms for this pair. He sought rather to emphasize certain features of dissimilarity between statements such as these and descriptive assertions like "The Russians have abolished private ownership of the means of production." He could not deny that people do sometimes use "true" and "false" to express their appraisals of moral assertions. But he sought to warn them against being misled by this or anything else into treating ethical terms like "moral duty" as descriptive predicates of the same type as "round," "yellow" or "pleasant." However, my own suggestion will be neutral in respect to all rival analyses of ethical terms which do not treat them as a single set of empirical predicates.

(ii) In connection with multi-valued logics it has been disputed whether they can properly be said to be logics in the same sense of "logic" as that in which someone might say "Logic is the critique of argument." Those who have asserted a difference in sense have generally been concerned to claim some type of logical primacy for two-valued logic. In their view the so-called "law of the excluded middle" is basic and any generalized law of the excluded $n + 1$th value for an n-valued logic is derivative. I hope it will be clear, however, that my suggestion of a three-valued system of ethical appraisal is neutral in respect to this dispute also. No one has denied that some interpretations of some multi-valued calculi, such as, for instance, the trichotomy "known for a fact," "doubtful" and "known not to be a fact," may be usefully applied in the appraisal of some groups of theories about the observable world. I wish to suggest or discuss interpretations which may be useful for the appraisal of moral assertions.

Unlike these two problems the one to which I wish to direct

attention has scarcely been discussed in public at all. Yet, as I shall argue, in a world where there is no general agreement about all standards of moral value it is both misleading and dangerous to apply a two-valued system to the appraisal of moral judgments. It is misleading because it suggests that we can fairly expect as much agreement from normal people about questions of morality as about questions of perceptual fact or mathematical derivability. It is dangerous because the disappointment of this expectation leads those disappointed to regard their opponents as unreasonable people who must be treated in the way that moral delinquents are treated within an organized community. It is, I think, less misleading and less dangerous to use a three-valued system of ethical appraisal which carries with it the implication that those with whom we are in moral disagreement may nevertheless be quite reasonable human beings.

I shall begin by trying to elucidate and defend my claim that there is no general agreement about standards of moral value. No one would deny that disputes often occur about what political principles are morally sound, say, or what forms of sexual relationship are morally permissible. But it might be argued that the occurrence of such disputes is no evidence of a fundamental diversity of moral standards.

II

"There cannot in principle be more than one set of moral standards. Part of what we mean by calling them 'moral' is that they are binding on all men alike, however much the detail of a situation may alter their consequences in different circumstances. Accordingly, only insincerity, impatience, or ignorance of fact can be responsible for failure to reach moral agreement. We all use the same standards for making moral judgments whether we are explicitly conscious of them or not. Consequently, there is no more need for three-valued appraisals in ethics than there is in mathematics or natural science."

But this objection is invalid because it rests on a concealed ambiguity in the word "moral." In one usage this word is used to describe certain attitudes of mind and the verbal expressions of these attitudes. It does not evaluate them in any way, but merely serves to distinguish them from other attitudes of mind and *their* expressions, which we call "amoral" or "non-moral." Most people have no difficulty in agreeing about what is or is not moral in this sense, although they might not find it so easy to give a precise definition of it. In cases of doubt about whether a man is capable of drawing moral distinctions, in this sense of "moral," law-courts generally summon the aid of professional psychologists. Colonial administrators who do not wish to offend the moral susceptibilities of their

subjects often take the advice of anthropologists in order to find out what these susceptibilities are. Professor Stevenson[1] has suggested a workable criterion for deciding which attitudes of mind are moral in this sense. If a man has a guilty conscience about doing (or not doing) something himself, or feels shocked and indignant when others do (or do not do) it, then we may call his attitude in the matter a "moral" one, and verbal expressions of such an attitude, whether sincere or insincere, "moral judgments." I do not wish to subscribe to Professor Stevenson's analysis of moral judgments, which is quite a different matter, but I shall adopt this definition as a rough criterion of the applicability of "moral" as a purely descriptive predicate, and I shall use the word in only this sense in the phrase "moral judgment." Of course, there may be some primitive communities whose members, though sane, never have any moral experience, in this sense. And there may be many other senses in which the word "moral" is, or could with advantage be, used as a purely descriptive adjective.

The word "moral," however, is also often used as an evaluative term within moral judgments, and in this sense it is used, like "right" or "morally right," as an opposite to "immoral" or "wrong."[2] The controversies of moral philosophy have often been centred around the problem of how to analyse or characterize "moral" (or "right," or "good") in this sense—the sense in which I might say "It's not moral to break your promise for purely selfish reasons"—since there are many different types of things which we can intend to say in giving verbal expression to our moral attitudes or in pretending to do so.

I do not wish to take sides on this issue here (if indeed there is any one analysis or group of analyses which is correct for all moral judgments ever made or likely to be made), because whatever answer to the problem is correct it will remain true that we need some terms for the appraisal of moral judgments. If, at one extreme, moral judgments are verbalized outbursts of emotion, our appraisals of them will be behaviour of the same sort, but we shall still need words to verbalize it. If, at the other, they ascribe non-natural or transcendental predicates, our appraisals of them will do the same. Whatever else it does, the evaluation of a moral judgment certainly echoes or refuses to echo the judgment evaluated. If I say "It is true that private ownership of the means of production is immoral" I am at least claiming the immorality of private ownership of the means of production, just as, if I say "It's true that it's raining," I

[1] *Ethics and Language*, 1945, p. 90.

[2] In this usage it may have descriptive force at the same time, as Professor Stevenson's second pattern of analysis has shown, but this is always supplementary.

am at least asserting that it is raining. Whatever the content of the assertions echoed we still use an appraisal-term like "true" or "false" to express our endorsement or rejection of them.

Now there is a syntactical or quasi-syntactical feature of most moral judgments which has been brought out in one way or another by most philosophers. This feature may be crudely summed up in the analytical thesis: "Morality—in the evaluative sense—is no respecter of persons." Sometimes it is brought out by emphasizing that moral judgments are not intended by their authors to express merely their own personal feelings. Professor Stevenson's first pattern of analysis does this by including an imperative which commands others to approve the same action. Professor Paton[1] has done it by holding that "the ordinary man takes it for granted that it is possible to judge in accordance with objective ethical principles"—principles "valid for all men so far as they are rational." And a similar effect is achieved by those who maintain that moral judgments claim the intuition of non-natural qualities or transcendental values, or by those who think they state what will promote or obstruct the greatest happiness of the greatest number. At other times this feature of most moral judgments is additionally brought out by the theory that whatever we claim to be a moral duty for someone in some specified circumstances we imply to be a duty for anyone else in those circumstances. Such is the doctrine of Kant's first formulation of the categorical imperative, and of the behest that we should treat others as we think that they should treat us.

There may, of course, be some people whose moral judgments do not exhibit any form of this feature. That is to say, there may be people who intend their moral judgments to express only their own personal feelings and never wish their moral judgments about a particular action to connote a judgment about all actions of the same class. Conceivably, they might even feel moral indignation at the introduction of objectivist implications into the syntax of moral judgments. If such persons are found at all, they probably occur only at very primitive or at very sophisticated levels of civilization. But we could not deny any of their judgments to be moral judgments just because they did not exhibit the syntactical feature under discussion, unless we adopted the possession of this feature as the criterion of what are moral judgments, in the descriptive sense of the word.[2] Even if we did so, however, there might still be disagreement between different people's moral judgments; for I might claim that private ownership of the means of production is objectively right and you might claim that it is objectively wrong.

[1] *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume xxii, p. 109.

[2] This seems to have been done by Mr. W. Kneale in *Philosophy*, vol. 25, No. 93 (April, 1950), p. 149 ff.

It should now be clear that the analytical thesis that morality (in the evaluative sense) is no respecter of persons does nothing at all to show that only insincerity, impatience or ignorance of fact can be responsible for failure to reach moral agreement (in the descriptive sense). It is obviously invalid to argue from morality's implications of objectivity, in the evaluative usage of the term, to the actual existence of universal moral agreement about ultimate standards, in the descriptive usage of "moral."[1] A man may think some particular standards are morally valuable for everyone, but it does not follow that everyone else thinks the same. Indeed, it may be that some disputes between so-called "subjectivists" and "objectivists" in moral philosophy have actually arisen from the confusion of these two senses of the word "moral" or similar words in English or other languages. An objectivist theory of morality is true for most people in the evaluative sense of "morality"; and in the descriptive sense some degree of subjectivism would be rendered plausible by the continued failure of mankind to reach universal moral agreement. Confuse the two senses and you have a hopeless antinomy.

III

"Even if no *a priori* proof of the unity of moral standards is possible, it may still be the case that there is no ultimate diversity. At any rate it is the assumption made by any people who enter on ethical argument with one another that patience, sincerity and knowledge of all the relevant facts will lead to an agreed conclusion. If they won't, what is the use of arguing? Besides, when we fail to reach agreement we do generally put it down to a deficiency in one of these prerequisites on the part of one or all of the parties to the argument. Accordingly, because it is just these same prerequisites which are necessary for agreement on questions of fact there is still no more need for three-valued appraisals in ethics than in natural science."

This objection offers no proof that moral agreement would result from patience, sincerity and complete knowledge, but suggests that people generally believe it would. I shall argue later (in IX) that this belief is not universal, and that where it persists in the contemporary world it is dangerous. In what immediately follows, however, I shall try to show that it is false or fantastic; and to this end I shall make a brief examination of ethical argument.

There are, I think, two main questions at issue, requiring the

[1] Accordingly, it is misleading to claim that logical analysis is irrelevant to the question "One morality or many?": cf. W. B. Gallie in *Philosophy* of October, 1949, p. 322. It helps to clarify the question, even if it does not answer it.

examination of ethical argument in two rather different ways for their solution. The first question is at least *prima facie* concerned with a causal probability: is it likely that universal patience, sincerity and factual omniscience would be accompanied by universal moral agreement? The second is partly a question of fact and partly of logic: does everyone agree, implicitly or explicitly, with those moral principles by reference to which, coupled with his factual knowledge, any omniscient could validly support all his sincere moral judgments?

These are quite separate questions. If the correct answer to the first were "Yes," it would not follow either that everyone already agrees to a certain set of principles or that he does not. Nor would either follow if it were "No." On the other hand, if everyone already agreed to such a set of moral principles, this agreement might or might not conceivably be dissipated by the growth of their knowledge. And if such an agreement did not already exist it might or might not conceivably be promoted by a more complete knowledge of fact. However, I shall try to show that the correct answer to both questions is "No."

IV

The first question is regarded simply as a psychological and sociological problem by Professor Stevenson,[1] and he considers the relevant sciences insufficiently developed for solving it. But even if we cannot find a solution to it in the text-books of social science there are some historical facts which make it appear at least *prima facie* difficult to believe that patience, sincerity and knowledge are the only factors controlling moral agreement. It is difficult to imagine a more patient and sincere man than Aristotle, for instance, but it is not easy to think of anything not known by that very knowledgeable philosopher which would in fact have made him morally disapprove of slavery, for instance. On the other hand, it seems unlikely, that an increase of knowledge in any field of modern study would bring about a general reversion to the moral approval of slavery. It is normal to explain our disagreement with Aristotle on this point in terms of differences in our social environment. But it was not Aristotle's view nor is it generally our own that the moral value of slavery varies according to its social environment. Again, there is at least some plausibility in the thesis that some economic changes are correlated with some changes in moral outlook. R. H. Tawney[2] has shown this, for instance, in regard to the mediaeval and modern European attitudes to usury. Indeed, there are so many moral disagreements which historians can correlate to at least some extent with environ-

[1] *Ethics and Language*, p. 137.
[2] In *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism.*

mental differences that the latter do seem to form a controlling factor in addition to knowledge, patience and sincerity. If this is so, they may prevent moral agreement even among those who are historically contemporary, and we might need a completely uniform system of laws, customs and social institutions before we could even expect universal moral agreement.

Accordingly, even if the question were a genuine problem for social scientists there are good reasons for expecting a negative answer to it from them. But I think that Professor Stevenson is mistaken in regarding it as such a problem. It can only be a problem for empirical science if we can in principle describe observable circumstances in which the specified conditions are fulfilled and moral agreement does not result. We must at least conceive of what would observably falsify the hypothesis if we are to pass it to the social scientists for testing with any confidence that they are the right people for the job. But I think it is in principle impossible to describe a set of observable circumstances which would testify to a man's possessing complete factual knowledge.

In the first place we should have to accept the evidence of a man's observable behaviour as testimony of what he knows. But anyone can say "I know the earth is round" and actually behave as if it were, while believing it flat and thus being in fact ignorant of its being round. Perhaps a perfectly efficient lie-detector may help us over this hurdle; but the next difficulty would, I think, be fatal. Complete factual knowledge must include knowledge of all possible scientific discoveries. But scientists expound their theories in the form of inductively argued hypotheses which they cease to hold in the face either of overwhelmingly unfavourable evidence or of simpler hypotheses covering the same evidence. Thus a complete body of scientific knowledge would only be possible if it were known both that no evidence would ever be observed that was unfavourable to the accepted hypotheses and also that these hypotheses were incapable of further simplification. But this itself could only be known on inductive grounds. Consequently, it would call for further knowledge about the unlikelihood of its own falsification, and so on *ad infinitum*. In view of this regress it seems absurd to talk about a complete body of scientific knowledge. Inductive science is in principle something that could never be known to be complete, and to ask whether a man has complete factual knowledge cannot be a genuine empirical question.

It might be thought that this last hurdle could be surmounted by calling only for knowledge of everything known at the time, not of everything known and knowable. But we cannot ever learn by observation alone whether any man has even this knowledge. If it is truly said of a man that he knows p, then normally it must at

least be the case that *p*. If he knows the earth is flat, then the earth must be flat. If the earth is not flat, then it will only be true to say "He is convinced the earth is flat." It is an important part of what we normally mean by the term "knowledge" that we can only know what is in fact the case. Accordingly, if we are to be able to test by observation that a man knows *p*, we must be able to observe whether it is the case that *p*. But there are some items of knowledge which are often considered highly relevant to moral controversy and yet are in principle closed to observational tests. We can never learn by observation whether a man knows that God exists or that men have immortal souls, for instance, because we can never learn by observation alone whether these religious doctrines are true. But it is apparently a conviction of the immortality of the soul and of the greater religious importance of its after-life, for instance, that chiefly influences Catholic surgeons in deciding the difficult moral issue that arises when a mother and her child cannot both survive. It follows that it cannot be a genuine empirical question to ask even whether complete knowledge of everything known at the time, coupled with patience and sincerity, would bring about moral agreement. The truth of religious doctrines about the supernatural can only be assessed by religious criteria, in default of an accepted natural theology, and we cannot expect agreement about what is or is not religious knowledge until there is a considerable degree of religious uniformity in the world. Thus again moral agreement seems to be at least in part conditional on social uniformity, and not merely on cognitive perfection.

From all this I conclude that it is fantastic to believe that patience, sincerity and empirical knowledge are sufficient conditions of a moral controversy's ending in agreement. In this I differ from Professor Stevenson, who thinks the belief unproven but not fantastic, and from David Hume who, as Professor Stevenson points out, accepts it as true.[1] Of course, if these three factors are coupled with an appropriate uniformity of social background the result of a moral controversy might always be agreement (if physiological, climatic and geographical differences are irrelevant). But until this degree of uniformity in laws, customs, religions and social institutions is universal we must expect many of our moral arguments to end in disagreement, even if they are conducted with patience, sincerity and knowledge. Moreover, if we consider dispassionately the contemporary strengths of Marxism, Catholicism, Islam, Western individualism, and so on, we can hardly expect an early achievement of this uniformity. Indeed, there might be many who were morally opposed to its achievement even if it involved their own social practices, becoming universal. There is nothing self-contradictory in

[1] *Ethics and Language*, pp. 138 and 274.

their holding that the co-existence of different social environments, producing different moral standards (in the descriptive sense of "moral"), is morally valuable, because it makes the world a more interesting place in which to live, because it creates a constant challenge to the soundness of their own standards, because it provides sanctuaries for moral eccentrics, or for any other reason.

V

However, there is, as I have suggested, a second way in which an examination of the nature of moral argument might show that there is an ultimate unity of moral standards.

So far I have been treating moral argument simply as a form of human behaviour about which, like all other human or animal activities, we can attempt to discover correlations and formulate inductively arguable hypotheses. This is the mode of treatment employed by Professor Stevenson in connection with the peculiarly ethical features of moral argument. He recognizes its occasional employment of ordinary inductive and deductive procedures in dealing with those questions of fact which may turn out to be related in some other way than inductive or deductive to the moral judgment at issue. But wherever this relationship does exist Professor Stevenson treats it as a psychological rather than a logical one. On such a view, apart from any subsidiary arguments which are solely about questions of fact, we can talk of the success or failure of moral reasoning, or even of its moral value, but never of its validity or invalidity.[1]

However, although this mode of treatment is enlightening, it is, I think, a mistake to regard it as the only possible one. It is not at all unusual to think and talk and write as if there were logical norms according to which moral arguments can be judged valid or invalid. Belief in the existence of such norms seems to be implicit in the ordinary man's calling those facts or evaluations which he urges in support of a moral judgment his "reasons" for it, as when he says, for instance:—

"The reason for the immorality of public flogging is that it increases rather than decreases brutality." (1)

But it will be immediately apparent that this is not an example of moral argument in the same sense of the term "argument" as the sentences quoted by Professor Stevenson to illustrate his discussion of the subject. In almost all his quotations conflicting views are expressed by two parties, A and B, who try to convince each other. Thus these quotations are examples of arguments in the sense of that word in which it means the same as "spoken contro-

[1] *Ethics and Language*, pp. 113 and 152 ff.

versy." And this type of example is quite appropriate for the psychological treatment of the subject adopted by Professor Stevenson. But (1) is not an example of a public debate or even of a soliloquized shilly-shallying. It is, instead, an example of an argument in the sense of that word in which it means the same as "reasoned substantiation of a conclusion."

It is because there seem to be moral arguments in this second sense of the word "argument" that a second question arises with reference to the unity or diversity of ultimate moral standards. If moral judgments are susceptible of proof it might be suspected that moral unity is in principle attainable by reasonable people, unless, of course, there can be logically valid arguments from true premisses to conflicting moral judgments. Now, I shall try to show that the logical norms of any moral argument are such that its premisses must themselves contain a moral judgment whatever else they contain. And whether we think a moral premiss true or false will depend on our own moral standards. Consequently, the best way of framing the second question is to ask: Does everyone agree, implicitly or explicitly, with those moral principles by reference to which, coupled with his factual knowledge, any omniscient could validly support all his sincere moral judgments?

VI

This is not the place for a comprehensive examination of all types of moral argument and a detailed review of the norms to which they approximate or conform. I shall not discuss, for instance, to what extent these norms are the same as those applicable to other arguments about matters of practice, that is, about what is or is not to be done, such as:—

"You should wear a coat to-day, because there's an east wind blowing." (2)

But I think it is important to emphasize that the norms of moral argument, if there are any such, will appear alike from the private deliberations of an individual in a moral quandary, from his reasoned moral advice to others, from his moral reflections on his own conduct or on that of others, and from the inter-personal discussions of two or more people engaged in moral deliberation, advice or criticism. It has recently been suggested by Mr. S. Hampshire[1] that the question, "What are the distinguishing characteristics of sentences expressing

[1] In *Mind*, October, 1949, p. 469 ff. In *Mind* of April, 1950, p. 223 ff., Mr. Baier has chosen to interpret Mr. Hampshire's words in such a way that his suggestion appears either "meaningless" or "grotesquely untrue" or confused. However, I take Mr. Hampshire to be as sane as Mr. Baier, and I think it only fair to assume that he is not talking nonsense or paradox. I have interpreted him accordingly.

moral praise or blame?" is concerned with "a relatively trivial side-issue." But, although this suggestion may be useful in directing philosophers' attention away from a one-sided concentration on the point of view of a moral spectator, there is nothing to be gained by rushing to the other extreme. We make use of criticisms in our deliberations, but we also make use of them in trying to redirect the actions of others and even in the gentle art of idle conversation.

It has also been suggested by Mr. Hampshire[1] that moral judgments are "supported by arguments consisting of factual judgments of a particular range" in a way similar to that in which statements about people's character or dispositions are established exclusively by reference to statements about their behaviour, although the former cannot be "deduced" from the latter. But, in the first place, it is manifestly incorrect to hold that only factual judgments are used for the support of moral ones. There is nothing unusual about the following arguments:—

> "If I ought either to pay or to apologise, I ought to pay, because he's certainly got no right to expect an apology." (3)
>
> "Hitler's invasion of Poland was immoral, not merely because it involved his breaking a treaty of non-aggression, but because all war is immoral." (4)

And in (3) and (4) it is clear that non-factual judgments are being used for the support of moral ones.

Moreover, even when a factual judgment is cited alone in support, it always makes sense, and is frequently the custom, to ask, "But how does that establish your moral judgment?" Thus someone might say, for instance:—

> "Because marriage is a contract, there's nothing wrong with divorce by mutual consent." (5)

And a question "Why?" might elicit a statement of the tacitly assumed premiss:—

> "There's nothing wrong with dissolving a contract by mutual consent." (6)

(A similar question addressed to an author of (2) might elicit the implicit premiss, "You should always wear a coat when there's an east wind blowing.") It is no use objecting that (6) is not really a premiss assumed in (5) if it is not actually stated. Anyone who rejected the moral judgment expressed in (6) would deny the conclusion of (5) to be properly established by its explicit premiss. The same is true of all similar arguments, like:—

> "It's no longer your duty to keep your promise, because doing so would endanger your life." (7)

[1] In the same article.

There might well be a dispute about whether promises of the sort concerned in (7) may justifiably be broken where there is a danger to life involved in keeping them, especially, say, if (7) were addressed by an interrogator to a captured prisoner-of-war. When the moral judgment, in virtue of which the facts cited are relevant to the conclusion, is not made explicit, it is assumed that this judgment may be taken for granted. But such an assumption is in any case often false; and we must not be misled by the frequency with which it is made into believing that the moral premiss is logically superfluous even when the assumption that it can be taken for granted is true. There is general agreement about what behaviour is evidence for this or that personal character; but it is just not the case that there is general agreement about what facts support this or that moral judgment. It requires another moral judgment to assert that they do.

Mr. Hampshire was led to this untenable theory by a legitimate objection to the view that when once the facts of the situation have been determined no further rational controversy is possible because we are left with an ultimate moral judgment which cannot be defended by any further factual statement. A form of this view is also attacked by Professor Stevenson[1] under the title of the "specialist's method." And it is clearly a mistake to assert that the moral premiss of a moral argument is itself incapable of logical support. It is just as reasonable, for instance, to ask "Why?" when someone utters (6) as it is when he utters (5). Of course, there might be occasions on which this question would be captious or absurd. It would be captious within any community in which the judgment expressed by (6) was accepted as an axiom[2] by even the most advanced moral reformer. It would be absurd within a community whose moral terminology was such that (6) would normally be used to express what was self-evident. But it is important to recognize that (as we have seen in II above) it is not logically necessary for everyone to hold the same views about what is axiomatic or self-evident in moral discourse. Thus, on the one hand, the sentence "Dialectical materialism represents the greatest moral advance in history" may be used by a Marxist to express what is self-evident to him, because he defines "moral value" in terms of a dialectical-materialist interpretation of history. On the other hand, a Catholic might use the same sentence to express what is self-contradictory for him, because he would define "moral value" in terms of an anti-materialist metaphysics. Moreover, there may well be people who

[1] *Ethics and Language*, p. 174 ff.

[2] Mr. S. Toulmin (*Proc. Ar. Soc.*, 1949–50, p. 155) has suggested that the proper reply to a captious question such as this would be "And what have you in mind as an alternative?"

think it morally wrong to consider any moral judgments axiomatic or self-evident, though controversy with them would probably appear unsatisfactory to others at the point at which their argument became circular.

It is not, therefore, a logically necessary feature of any moral argument that it relies on ultimate evaluations that are incapable of further defence, but only a contingent feature of some controversies. The ultimacy of any moral judgment is dependent on temporary agreement, social custom, or religious and ideological uniformity, and like all such matters it is itself open to moral criticism by outsiders. Nevertheless, there is nothing to be gained by rushing away from the Scylla of holding that moral judgments are in principle incapable of support by factual judgments to the Charybdis of claiming that they can be supported by them alone. I am not asserting that every moral argument has an isolable premiss which is an ultimate or intrinsic injunction, decision or evaluation, but merely that it has an isolable premiss which is itself a moral judgment. This premiss may, but need not, be axiomatic or self-evident for some or all human beings.

VII

I conclude that if we interpret the question, "Is there a diversity of moral standards?" as requiring rather a logical examination of a moral argument than a psychological and sociological survey of moral controversy it should not be replaced by the question, "Can there be logically valid arguments from true premisses to conflicting moral judgments?" Such a replacement might over-simplify the issue by suggesting that the supporting premisses of a moral conclusion can only be factual assertions, whereas it seems clear that they must always include a moral judgment. But we can only ask whether a moral judgment is true or false from within our own framework of moral evaluation. If we asked "Can there be logically valid arguments from true premisses (including true moral judgments) to conflicting moral judgments?" this would be a question about the coherence and consistency of our own particular moral standards, or about those of any particular set of moral standards, whereas the problem I am trying to solve is concerned with the totality of moral standards. Accordingly, I think the appropriate question to ask is: "Does everyone agree with those moral judgments by reference to which, coupled with his factual knowledge, any omniscient could validly support his sincere moral judgments?" And I think the answer to this should be "No."

In order to give any answer at all we must over-simplify by regarding an omniscient merely as someone who has all empirical

knowledge at present available, because of the difficulties involved in talking about omniscience which I have already mentioned. But even if we do make this over-simplification there are still some important ultimate moral disagreements like the one between Catholics and Marxists about the moral value of dialectical materialism. This disagreement does not arise from the occasional clash in application of two principles which for the most part cannot be used to justify conflicting judgments, like the stock example of a conflict of duties—the problem whether to aid a murder by giving back a knife you have borrowed from the potential murderer. It arises instead from the clash of two principles which cannot conceivably co-exist in the moral outlook of anyone but the possessor of a split personality. It is a fundamental disagreement, which is the logical antecedent of an unlimited number of particular disputes about the morality of governmental confiscation of Church property, about whether an obstetric surgeon should save the mother rather than the child, about whether peasants should invest their capital in a new Church or in land drainage, and so on. So long as there is an ultimate disagreement about the relative moral importance of social reform and spiritual salvation no amount of available knowledge will achieve a proof of either view in any of these disputes to the satisfaction of the other side. And it is on issues like these that I rest my claim to the existence in the contemporary world of some moral outlooks which are logically (as well as psychologically and sociologically) irreconcilable.

VIII

I do not deny that there may be many moral principles on which there is general agreement. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, for instance, perhaps contains some such principles, although there may be different interpretations which different people would wish to put on the wording of some of its articles. I am not referring to pious platitudes about justice and freedom which do not describe the kind of conduct considered valuable in a way that enables anyone to distinguish it from other kinds of conduct; for there is seldom any difficulty in procuring the incantation of sentences like "We believe in justice, freedom and the real will of the common people." I refer to rather less ambiguous assertions, like Article 24 of the Declaration: "Everyone has the right to rest and leisure." But, however extensive is the area of definite moral agreement, I have shown, I hope, that there are still logically irreconcilable disagreements to-day among equally sincere moral judgments, and that there are reasons for expecting no early emergence of moral unanimity. We do not live in a unitary moral world, however convenient it might be to do so. And I hope it is

clear that in all such uses of the word "moral" I am employing it in a purely descriptive sense. I do not mean that all divergent moral outlooks have an equal moral value, but merely that there are divergent moral outlooks. Personally I am convinced that some of these are much more valuable than others. But there is no way of demonstrating this conclusively to all people, nor can I expect any early recognition of it by all concerned.

It is therefore misleading to use a two-valued system for the appraisal of contemporary moral judgments. The use of such a system for the appraisal of perceptual reports or mathematical derivations is normally taken to carry with it the implication that it is unreasonable for anyone to persist in assertions about these matters which are generally considered incorrect by his neighbours. If I refuse to take any measures to cure myself of the delusion that seven pink wallabies are hanging from the ceiling, for instance, I should naturally be considered unreasonable. Anyone who calls my reports about the hanging wallabies "false" is not only asserting that the wallabies are not there, but he is also suggesting—or would be taken by most people to be suggesting—that I have not exercised a reasonable degree of care and sincerity in making my report, and that if everyone did exercise this there would be universal agreement about the absence of the wallabies. And the use of a two-valued system for the appraisal of moral judgments will carry over with it the implication that any disagreement in appraisal is merely the result of carelessness and insincerity, either on one side or on both. But I have shown, I hope, that carefulness and sincerity are not sufficient to secure moral agreement in the contemporary world, because there is at least some ultimate diversity of moral standards. It follows that any usage which suggests that they are sufficient for this is gravely misleading.

If we wish to avoid making this misleading suggestion, we must cease to classify moral judgments as "true" or "false," "correct" or "incorrect," "right" or "wrong," "good" or "evil," or "white" or "black." We must employ instead a three-valued system of appraisal which will allow us to express our disagreement with someone else's moral judgments without being taken to imply that he is being unreasonable. Of course, there may be many different systems of three-valued appraisal which are appropriate in one way or another; and there may be a great variety of words which can be used for the terminological crystallization of these systems. There might even be systems of more than three values which would be useful for some purposes. I shall confine myself, however, to a brief discussion of three or four specific methods of three-valued ethical appraisal, each of which seems to be representative of a type of procedure which is at least in some respects appropriate.

(i) We can use the terms "orthodox," "heterodox" and "paradoxical." Besides declaring our own views on the subject—which as I have argued in II above any system of appraisal must do—we would also state thereby whether the judgment appraised was in conformity with the moral standards of the community or social group in which it was uttered, with those of another group only, or with those of no existing group, respectively. That is to say, to call a moral judgment "orthodox" would be to endorse it and state its conformity. If we called it "heterodox" we should be refusing to endorse (but not rejecting) it and stating its relative nonconformity. If we called it "paradoxical" we should be rejecting it and stating its absolute nonconformity. This method of appraisal would be suitable for mild-tempered individuals who regard themselves as spectators of the conflict between different moral codes rather than as agents in it. It might be objected that the method is absurdly cumbrous because its users would be involved in adherence to a three-valued calculus for the construction of their moral arguments. But in practice this would present no difficulty. The value of the conclusion to a moral argument would by this method, I think, always be the same as that of the argument's moral premiss. The conclusion of (7), for instance, is heterodox if the moral premiss about the conditions under which a promise may be broken is heterodox. The same consideration applies to the next two methods which I shall examine, although there may well be methods of three-valued ethical appraisal against which this objection has greater weight.

(ii) We can use the terms "deserving," "tolerable" and "intolerable." Besides declaring our own views on the subject we should also state thereby whether expressions of the judgment appraised should be encouraged, merely tolerated or definitely suppressed. This method of appraisal would be suitable for people with strong views who regard themselves as agents in the ideological conflict rather than as spectators of it. In itself it carries no implications about which views are tolerable and which are intolerable, but whether this is an advantage or a disadvantage will depend on the nature and strength of our own moral convictions. An alternative method of the same type might emphasize what we should like done to our own views, rather more than what we think ought to be done to those expressed by other people. That is, if we endorsed a view and insisted on its being tolerated, we might call it "vital"; if we did not endorse a view and were prepared to have it suppressed, we might call it "unimportant"; and if we rejected a view altogether we might call it "unwanted." Perhaps the operational difference between these two methods is that in political bargaining the former method would be used from a strong position, the latter from a weak one.

(iii) We can use the terms "justifiable," "misguided" and "irra-

tional." When a man thinks that, with the requisite care and attention to fact, someone else's moral judgment may be seen to be supported by another moral judgment with which he himself agrees, or when he agrees with it outright, he would call it "justifiable." When, despite the exercise of this care, it can only be seen to be supported by a moral judgment with which he disagrees, but which is agreed to by the author of the original judgment, or when it is for its author an ultimate moral judgment with which he himself disagrees, he would call it "misguided." And when with the exercise of this care its denial may be seen to be supported by a moral judgment with which they both agree he should call it "irrational." Thus the irrationality of a moral judgment would imply the unreasonableness of its author, but its justifiability or misguidedness implies his reasonableness. The moral judgments of conscientious Catholics and Marxists, for instance, would in some cases be considered misguided by a Protestant social democrat, but not necessarily unreasonable. This method of three-valued appraisal would be suitable for logically-minded individualists who had the time and inclination for rational controversy. But to use it requires a certain degree of intellectual detachment of which some might be incapable.

These are just three or four possible terminologies for the three-valued appraisal of moral judgments, whether the latter are made in injunctions, policy-statements, criticisms or any other way. It will not always be possible to use these words in precisely the same grammatical constructions as those in which the words "true" and "false" can be used. For instance, in English we cannot say, "It is deserving that all promises ought always to be kept" in the way that we can say, "It is true that all promises ought always to be kept." But we can give the word "deserving" a logical force analogous to that of "true" by using it in the sense which I have suggested in (ii) above, in a sentence like, "The view that all promises ought always to be kept is a deserving one." It would, of course, also be possible to use these terms as ordinary moral predicates, like "good," "evil" or "wrongful," as in "All promise-keeping is deserving." Many people do often distinguish grades of good and evil, ranging from the most devilish sin through minor peccadilloes and minor virtues to the saintlier glories. Indeed, they may consider a simple dichotomy of good and evil to be morally inferior to more subtle and complex systems of moral grading; and the use of such systems may encourage, and be encouraged by, the use of a three-valued system of ethical appraisal.[1] But I am concerned here only with the appraisal of moral judgments, not with the judgments themselves. Even if all the various existing moral codes contained simple (but mutually conflicting) dichotomies of good and evil, it would still be

[1] I am indebted to Mr. Eric Gillman on this point.

arguable that in such a pluralist moral world it is less misleading to use a three-valued than a two-valued system of ethical appraisal. Moreover, this could be shown (in the way that I have attempted) by comparing the logic of moral judgments with that of perceptual statements and mathematical derivations, whereas the desirability of a multi-valued system of moral grading (as distinct from a simple dichotomy) can only be established by reference to an agreed set of moral standards.

IX

It might, however, be objected that it would be wiser and more discreet to continue a usage which suggests that ultimate moral agreement is universally attainable by patience, sincerity and, factual omniscience. So long as people hold this erroneous belief, it might be said, they may still continue to argue with their moral opponents in the hope of effecting a rational conversion. But as soon as their error is exposed they would be discouraged from pursuing any further argument. Instead, they would be encouraged to resort to force, since they would know that no rational arguments would fully prevail over their opponents. Against this objection, however, I shall try to show that, on the contrary, in a pluralist moral society a three-valued system of ethical appraisal is more pacificatory than a two-valued one.

In the first place, many people habitually use a three-valued system for their ethical appraisals, although without any crystallized terminology such as I have been discussing. In some countries of north-western Europe this habit seems to be partly an outgrowth of the development of religious tolerance since the seventeenth century, partly conditioned by material prosperity and a high standard of living, and partly, perhaps, favoured by an equable climate. Thus it is not uncommon in England to hear someone say "I respect the sincerity of his view and his reasons for holding it, but I think him mistaken," or "He really is quite irrational—his attitude is a mass of hypocrisy and contradiction," or "We must agree to differ about the moral value of peace-time conscription." There are certainly plenty of moral bigots here too, who have no respect for moral principles with which they disagree. But on the whole the stability and effectiveness of parliamentary government of the United Kingdom variety is directly proportional to the strength of three-valued ethics. If the party or coalition in power thinks the opposition party or parties to be misguided though not unreasonable they are prepared to debate with them and to answer their criticisms. But if a party thinks all its opponents equally unreasonable, whether through ignorance, impetuousness or insincerity, it will tend to suppress them and reserve perpetual power

for itself. This has so often been the practice of religious or political bigots throughout the world's history that it is unnecessary as well as invidious to select any specific example as an illustration. I do not mean to claim that stable parliamentary government is the historical result of using a three-valued system, nor that the latter results from the former, but merely that the two phenomena generally occur together. It may be the case that in a world where there are extremes of poverty, climate, and fanaticism any proposal to extend the practice of three-valued ethical appraisal is foredoomed to failure. But I think the proposal should at least go forward for consideration by all whom it can reach.

Furthermore, it is not difficult to see why the practice of three-valued ethics is a factor for peace in a pluralist moral society. If the material forces on either side are comparatively evenly balanced the resort to violence is only likely to be successful if a moral collapse can be expected on one side or the other. If the views of one side are only the result of failing to exercise self-control, sincerity or knowledge, it is to be expected that propaganda can more easily make headway in converting the deluded rank and file. But if the opposing moral doctrines are both reasonably well founded there is no likelihood of an easy conversion. The only way to avoid a bitterly fought struggle in which neither side can win without doing excessive and irreparable damage to itself is to achieve a political *modus vivendi*, embodied in national or international institutions, as the case may be. The use of a three-valued system of ethical appraisal makes clear the need for such institutions or conventions wherever the opposing doctrines are not unevenly matched in their backing of material strength. And that is why it would discourage, rather than encourage, the resort to violence in the contemporary international world.

It is a paradoxical feature of two-valued ethics—which may mislead if it goes unnoticed—that in a pluralist moral society the use of such a system is disruptive of social peace, while in a comparatively monist moral society the opposite is the case. Where there is no ultimate diversity of value standards the use of a two-valued system of ethical appraisal emphasizes that only patience, sincerity and available knowledge of empirical fact are necessary in order to make moral decisions, injunctions or criticisms which will be universally held correct. It encourages those who make moral judgments which are incorrect by the prevalent standards to revise them by increasing their patience, improving their sincerity, or extending their knowledge. Thus it acts as a constant stimulus towards the achievement of agreement in moral detail as well as in moral principle. Those whose judgments are shown to be incorrect by prevalent standards cannot expect to summon up any sustained moral fervour from others in their support. And those who can show their judgments

to be correct can array the rest of their society behind them in moral indignation at any transgression by a few moral delinquents. In such a society the life of the sinner and of the moral reformer is equally hard. But at the cost of this the use of a two-valued system of ethical appraisal is likely to promote the peaceful resolution of moral controversies.

But it is only within religiously or ideologically uniform communities that these conditions operate to-day. And in the pluralist moral world of international civilized society the practice of two-valued ethics is disruptive of social peace because it suggests that those who persist in disagreeing with us are being unreasonable. It suggests that they are the same sort of people as are moral delinquents in a monist moral society. It suggests that they are insane, depraved, ill-educated or lacking in self-control, and that against them we shall have the same easy victory by force as does the law-enforcing mechanism of a monist moral society against its moral delinquents. Meanwhile, they are thinking the same about us, and when we come to blows we find, to the surprise of some, that both sides have an equal strength of moral fervour.

There may, of course, be people who object to my recommendation of three-valued ethics because they approve of moral bigotry. I can only say that I believe this objection to be either misguided or irrational (in my sense of those words). It is misguided if it deliberately prefers to precipitate an international pseudo-Armageddon. It is irrational if it results from ignorance of the effects of using a two-valued system of ethical appraisal in a pluralist moral world or from a failure to recognize the moral plurality of contemporary civilization—through a confusion of the evaluative and descriptive usages of the term "moral" (and similar words), through an over-optimistic opinion about the present or future extent of ultimate moral agreement, or through a misunderstanding of the logical structure of moral argument.

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KANT'S PRESUMED REPUDIATION OF THE "MORAL ARGUMENT" IN THE *OPUS POSTUMUM:* AN EXAMINATION OF ADICKES' INTERPRETATION[1]

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UNTIL comparatively recently the complete text of the *Opus Postumum* has not been available to students of the Kantian philosophy. Prior to the publication of Adickes' commentary on this material in 1920, students of Kant were almost wholly dependent upon Reicke's incomplete and markedly inadequate edition of 1882–84.[2] Adickes' commentary, with its abundance of quoted passages, provided an access to a great deal of material hitherto unavailable. But it was not until the publication of the Academy Edition in 1936 that the complete text became available for independent study. Because of the recent publication of the full text, most accounts of Kant's position in the *Opus Postumum* have depended upon Reicke's inadequate edition or, as has been more frequently the case, upon Adickes' commentary.[3] In view of the considerable influence it has had upon Kant interpretation, Adickes' analysis of the *Opus Postumum* warrants a careful and critical examination.

Erich Adickes was, until his death, one of the most faithful and responsible of Kant scholars. It was largely because of his untiring efforts that the text of the *Opus Postumum* is now available. Much of his work on Kant is sufficiently definitive that it merits no re-examination. This is no less true of his interpretation of the *Opus Postumum* than of his analysis of Kant's concept of the "thing in itself" and other crucial problems. It is the authoritativeness and general reliability of his scholarship which makes it all the more important to examine his analysis of the *Opus Postumum.* Although his interpretation is generally sound, I am convinced that on at least one important point he is quite mistaken. It will be the burden of this paper to substantiate this criticism.

From his study of the *Opus Postumum* Adickes became convinced

[1] References to the *Opus Postumum* and Kant's *Reflexionen* are from the Berlin Edition of Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften.* References to Kant's *Werke* are from the *Cassirer Edition.* All translations are my own.

[2] Cf. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften,* v. 21, p. V.

[3] Cf. N. K. Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason,* pp. 640 ff.; T. M. Greene, *Kant's Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone,* p. LXIV ff.; C. C. J. Webb, *Kant's Philosophy of Religion,* p. 192; A. H. Dakin, *The Heritage of Kant,* p. 414; Lewis White Beck, *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason,* p. 48.

that in the last few years of his life Kant found it necessary to repudiate the moral argument for the existence of God.[1] In its place, according to Adickes, he substituted a personal and subjective religious faith. "This whole doctrine of the highest good, together with the proofs of God and immortality which are based upon it, have almost completely disappeared (*so gut wie völlig verschwundeu*) in the seventh and first sections (*Konvolut*). The new proof of God's existence expresses only a subjective experience of the transcendent God in the categorical imperative, thus a pure personal faith" (*Kant's Op. Post.*, p. 846). To anyone familiar with his critical writings it hardly needs to be pointed out that, if true, this is a startling development in Kant's thought. It would involve a repudiation of a considerable part of his critical philosophy and the acceptance of a principle which Kant had insistently denounced as *schwärmerish.*[2] It is even more remarkable in view of the fact that this revolution in Kant's thought is alleged to have taken place after 1800.[3] For the most part Adickes found few significant developments in the *Opus Postumum*, and almost no changes from Kant's earlier views.[4] In fact, he devoted a considerable part of his commentary to the defence of Kant's critical position as reiterated in these writings. He categorically refused to allow Vaihinger's contention that Kant explicitly adopted a *Fiktionslehre* in the *Opus Postumum*, in spite of a large number of passages which appear to provide strong support for Vaihinger's thesis.[5] Since Adickes refused to allow Vaihinger's interpretation and maintained that Kant held to practically all of his critical doctrines in the *Opus Postumum*, only attempting to expand and elaborate them, it is indeed curious that he should unhesitatingly acknowledge Kant's abandonment of the critical method with respect to religion.

It is important to note that the *Opus Postumum* consists of a collection of jottings or reflections which fail of organization and even punctuation. Many of them are incomplete and some are unintelligible. Statements which are contradictory or at least incompatible are to be found alongside each other with no explanation of the way in which they are to be reconciled. The disjointed nature of this material has prompted some scholars to dismiss the *Opus Postumum*

[1] Adickes, *"Kant's Opus Postumum, dargestellt und beurteilt," Kantstudien*, v. 50, pp. 720 ff., 801, 804.

[2] *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 5, pp. 94, 133; *Von einem neuerdings erhoben evornehmen Ton in der Philosophie*, w. v. 6, pp. 487, 491; *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, w. v. 7, pp. 366, 387; *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 819–B 847; *Opus Postumum*, v. 21, p. 26.

[3] Adickes, *op. cit.*, pp. 154, 720 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 594 ff.

[5] Adickes, *op. cit.*, pp. 709, 785, 811 ff; *Kant und die als ob Philosophie*, p. 63; cf. Vaihinger, *Die Philosophie des als ob*, pp. 724 ff., 731, 772 ff.

as a product of Kant's senility and of no value whatever for an interpretation of his philosophy.[1] Although I think that this judgment is mistaken, it is true, none the less, that we are dealing with a work which presents enormous problems. The *Opus Postumum* is quite similar in character to the *Reflexionen* which Kant set down as he worked out the problems of the three *Critiques*.[2] He depended upon a dialectical method for the development of his ideas; it was his practice to set down the *pro* and *con* on a given question and then to indicate his own view. Apparently he came to rely even more heavily on this method of composition in later years.[3] Because of the brevity and incompleteness of many passages in the *Opus Postumum*, it is difficult to know when Kant is stating his own view and when he is asserting a thesis which he intends to refute.[4] The only possibility of determining Kant's own views with any reliability depends upon constant reference to his earlier writings. With these as a guide the problem of interpretation is not insuperable. Without them the *Opus Postumum* must remain an unintelligible array of assorted statements. This is especially true of those sections of the *Opus Postumum* which were written after 1800. Here we have almost none of Kant's letters or systematic writings as a guide for analysis. Yet it is the first and seventh sections of the *Opus Postumum* which were written after 1800,[5] upon which Adickes bases his contention that Kant repudiated the moral argument. His case is initially weakened by the fact that he finds no indication of such a shift in Kant's thinking prior to that date.

Recognizing the difficulty of determining Kant's intended meaning in the *Opus Postumum*, Adickes formulated a sound principle. He insisted that Kant's critical views must always be taken for granted in reading passages from this work. "It is not a legitimate scientific practice to select individual passages and consider them in isolation. On the contrary, one must interpret one passage in terms of others and in the context of the whole conceptual framework which one is able to derive from them in their totality." "In many passages Kant omitted essential elements which he stated in other places, but even in these instances where he omitted to state a view, it remains in the background of his thought."[6] He employed this method consistently

[1] Adickes, *Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 17 ff.; cf. Cassirer, *Kant's Leben und Lehre*, p. 435.

[2] One can imagine the difficulties that would be involved in trying to ascertain Kant's views if it were necessary to substitute his *Reflexionen* for the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

[3] Cf. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 608 ff.

[4] Adickes, *Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 720 ff.

[5] Adickes, *Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 22 ff.; 153 ff.

[6] *Kant's Op. Post.*, p. 772; cf. pp. 621, 807, 832 ff.; *Kant und die als ob Philosophie*, p. 273.

and with force in denying Vaihinger's interpretation. In dealing with those statements in which Kant explicitly states that God is merely an idea and not a substance existing outside the mind of the individual, Adickes maintained that the existence of God is not here in question.[1] He followed the same procedure in refuting Vaihinger's contention that Kant had come to regard the "thing in itself" as a mere fiction. Without this principle Adickes would hardly have been able to write his commentary, and certainly would not have been able to defend Kant's position in the *Opus Postumum* as fundamentally consistent with his critical doctrines. If one disallows this principle, there is no reason whatever for denying Vaihinger's interpretation, nor the interpretation of others which Adickes rejects.[2]

The soundness of Adickes' method of interpretation in this respect is not in question. There would appear to be no alternative principle which could lay claim to reliability. In fact, it is precisely because of the adequacy of this principle that I find it necessary to reject Adickes' contention that Kant had abandoned the moral argument. In interpreting those passages in which Kant refers to the categorical imperative as the "voice of God," Adickes departs from his interpretive principle. He takes these and other passages which support his thesis literally and at their face value, whereas he insists upon reading all statements which appear to deny it in the context of Kant's earlier writings. For reasons which can only appear to be wholly arbitrary he permits himself a departure from the contextual principle which he denied Vaihinger. Surely some explanation must be forthcoming for this arbitrariness.

It will by no means provide a refutation of his interpretation to point to a possible motive for Adickes' departure from his avowed method. However, the circumstance is so remarkable that it may not be without significance. In an article which appeared in the first volume of the *Kantstudien*, published several years before he had begun his study of the *Opus Postumum*, Adickes observed that Kant's stubborn insistence upon objectivity had prevented him from deciding in favour of a direct personal faith in God. The passage is worth quoting.

[1] Adickes, *Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 792 ff.

[2] E.g. that Kant adopted an onotological argument in the *Opus Post.* or that he identified God with the moral law, thus adopting a Fichtean position. "The mere idea of God is at once a proof of His existence." "God must not be thought of as a substance outside of me but as the highest moral principle in me" (*Opus Post.*, v. 21, pp. 145 ff., v. 22, pp. 56 ff., 108). Lewis White Beck mistakenly concludes that Kant identified God with the moral law in the *Opus Post.* (*op. cit.*, p. 48). Adickes disposes of this interpretation, as well as of the view that Kant regarded God as a fiction, quite conclusively (*Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 772 ff.). It is unfortunate that Adickes falls into a similar error himself.

The basis of all faith is purely subjective (*rein subjektiver*); therefore, the vital element of all faith is the region of the purely personal and individual. Kant never realized this, nor could he realize it, because such a faith would not, from Kant's point of view, provide adequate security or sufficient support for religion or morality.[1]

In this observation that Kant was far too concerned to provide for objectivity and universality to grant that belief in God is purely a matter of personal conviction, Adickes was perfectly correct. The critical method was primarily, if not exclusively, concerned to provide for objectivity in our knowledge. Kant's exposition of the theoretical reason, as well as of judgment and the practical reason, is intelligible only upon the basis of that assumption. The *a priori* for Kant is the foundation stone upon which any objective knowledge of experience must be based. If he was to be at all consistent in the application of his method to morality and religion, Kant had no alternative but to make explicit those *a priori* conditions which are necessarily involved and presupposed in moral and religious judgments. In recognizing this element in Kant's thought Adickes was specifying an essential characteristic of the transcendental method. Nor was this any less true in 1798 than in 1781.[2] The question is whether there is sufficient grounds for the contention that Kant made a serious exception to this principle after 1800.

Adickes found Kant's moral argument to be unsatisfactory on two counts: (1) that it failed to recognize the personal and subjective character of religious faith; (2) that it involved the introduction of a hedonistic element into Kant's ethics. When, in the *Opus Postumum*, he finds Kant stating that the existence of God is not demonstrable and that faith in God is subjective, Adickes accepts these statements as evidence that Kant had seen the inadequacies of his earlier position.

It is not relevant to our discussion to consider the adequacy of Kant's so called "moral argument." It may be argued with considerable force, I think, that it is not strictly an "argument" or "proof" in the sense in which Adickes construes it, and, further, that it does not involve the introduction of a hedonistic principle into Kant's ethics. It is unfortunate that Kant referred to the postulation of God in the practical part of his philosophy as an "argument" or "proof." As a matter of fact it was not at all a proof, any more than the deduction of space and time had been a "proof."[3] One could deny the existence of God even from the point of view of morality,

[1] "Die bewegende Krafte in Kant's philosophischer Entwicklung"; *Kantstudien*, v. 1, p. 402; cf. *Kant's Op. Post.*, p. 818.

[2] Cf. *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, w. v. 7, pp. 351, 355, 383 ff.; cf. also w. v. 8, p. 230.

[3] *Uber die Fortschritte der Metaphysik seit Leibniz und Wolff*, w. v. 8, p. 289; cf. *Opus Postumum*, v. 21, pp. 152 ff.

Kant had admitted. It is not that one is theoretically impelled to postulate God's existence in order to escape a logical inconsistency. Rather, one is forced to postulate His existence by virtue of a "practical necessity."[1] The atheist may deny the existence of God, but he thereby becomes a *Bösewicht.*" To deny the existence of God from the point of view of the practical reason is not an *absurdum logicum* but an *absurdum prakticum.*[2] Kant repeatedly referred to the concept of God as a "subjective postulate."[3] When Adickes finds Kant denying the demonstrability of God in the *Opus Postumum* and asserting that it is a matter of subjective faith, Adickes appears to have forgotten that the term "subjective" is frequently employed in this connection in the critical writings. It has a special meaning for Kant in this context, nor is there any reason to believe that its meaning had been radically altered in the *Opus Postumum.* Kant had made it clear enough in his critical writings that the existence of God is not theoretically demonstrable in any way whatever.[4] He did make a limited claim for the theoretical status of the idea of God in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* a claim which he reiterates in the *Opus Postumum.* In this case, as in the statements concerning God in the *Opus Postumum,* no claim was made for the existence of an object corresponding to the idea.[5]

From a strictly theoretical point of view it is quite natural for Kant to speak of the idea of God as having no existential reference. It was Vaihinger's failure to make this distinction which caused him to treat the idea of God in the *Opus Postumum* as a fiction.[6] Similarly, it is Adickes failure to distinguish between the theoretical demonstrability of God by the pure reason and the postulation of God by the practical reason as a necessary and *a priori,* though "subjective," concept that prompts him to attribute a new subjectivism to Kant. On the basis of the practical reason we have subjective certitude that

[1] *Was heisst: sich im Denken orientieren?* w. v. 4, pp. 539, 360 note.

[2] *Kant's Vorlesungen über die phil. Religionslehre,* ed. by Politz, pp. 160 ff.; cf. *Was heisst: sich im Denken orientieren,* w. v. 4, p. 357; *Das Ende aller Dinge,* w. v. 6, p. 421; *Zum ewigen Frieden,* w. v. 6, pp. 446 ff.; *Critique of Judgment,* w.v. 5, p. 537; Paulsen, *Kant's Verhältnis zur Metaphysik,* p. 417.

[3] "It is necessary on pure moral grounds (hence purely subjective), without reference to theoretical proofs, still less to self-interest, and free from any foreign influence, to assume a morally legislative Being who transcends the world." *Critique of Judgment,* w. v. 5, p. 527; cf. p. 532; *Critique of Pure Reason,* A 829–B 857; *Von einem n. er. vor Ton in der Phil.,* w. v. 6, p. 490; *Zum wigen Frieden,* w. v. 6, p. 507; *Critique of Practical Reason,* w. v. 5, p. 158.

[4] *Über die Fortschritte,* w. v. 8, p. 290; *Critique of Pure Reason,* A 820–B 848 ff.; *Critique of Judgment,* w. v. 6, pp. 485, 549 ff., 545; *Die Religion Innerhalb,* w. v. 6, p. 290; *Zum ewigen Frieden,* w. v. 6, p. 507.

[5] *Critique of Pure Reason,* A 772–B 800, A 663–B 691, A 674–B 702; *Op. Post.,* v. 21, pp. 20, 63, 94, 151; v. 22, pp. 56, 117.

[6] Cf. Vaihinger, *op. cit.,* pp. 722 ff.

God exists. This is an objective subjectivity, but it is subjectivity none the less. The postulates of practical reason are *subjective* in that they are not theoretically demonstrable; they are *objective* in that they are the necessary (*a priori*) conditions for the possibility of any rational morality. Kant had never held that the existence of God could be proven theoretically. In reiterating this view in the *Opus Postumum*, as well as in holding that faith in God is subjective in character, it is not apparent that Kant is saying anything that he had not said many times over in his earlier writings. If Adickes had wished to apply the same method of interpretation in this instance to Kant's critical writings, he could have found just as good support for his thesis from them as from the *Opus Postumum*.

In regard to the second point, namely that Kant introduced a hedonistic element into his ethics by way of the moral argument, it is necessary to establish the fact that Kant recognized this to be the case. It has been maintained by others that Kant did actually introduce such a hedonistic element into his ethics by allowing the legitimacy of the appeal to personal happiness. There is a certain confusion at this point in the understanding of Kant's position. It is due to a considerable extent to a lack of clarity in Kant's exposition. Actually, there are two different formulations of the moral argument to be found in his ethical writings. The argument from the necessity for personal happiness is the earlier and less adequate formulation of the argument.[1] In spite of the fact that it does not, in my judgment, represent the real intent of Kant's discussion, he restates it in this form throughout his later writings, perhaps because of its convenience. But whether Kant did or did not actually introduce a hedonistic principle into his ethics, it is unmistakably clear that he did not intend to do so. He repeatedly denied that the hope for happiness constitutes a motive for moral action.[2] On Kant's grounds

[1] Kant recognized that the possibility of realizing the *Summum Bonum* requires certain metaphysical conditions. God makes the "ought" a "can." In this sense the postulation of God is in no way dependent upon the appeal to personal happiness or to immortality. A persistent stoical and individualistic tendency in Kant's thought prevented him from putting more stress on this practical requirement. This twofold concept of the *Summum Bonum* and the moral argument reappears in the *Opus Postumum*. Even if Kant had repudiated the argument from happiness, he would not have been repudiating the moral argument in its more satisfactory formulation. Cf. *Religion Innerhalb*, w. v. 6, p. 286; *Critique of Judgment*, w. v. 5, p. 527; *Über die Misslingen aller philos. versuche in der Theodicee*, w. v. 6, p. 103 ff.; *Über die Fortschritte*, w. v. 8, p. 292; *Über den Gebrauch teleologischer Prinzipien in der Philosophie*, w. v. 4, p. 514; Marcwogan, *Vier Studien zu Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft*, p. 294 ff.

[2] *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 4, p. 141; *Was heisst: sich im Denken orientieren?* w. v. 4, pp. 357 ff.; "Thus morality is not the theory, how we can attain happiness, but how we can become worthy of happiness." *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, w. v. 7, pp. 185 ff.; *Von e. n. er. vor. Ton in der Phil.*, w. v. 6, p. 484 note; *Reflex.* 64 54, Ber.

morality is either unconditionally obligatory or else it is "pathological." Duty is conditioned upon no material conditions whatever. Morality is no less "pathological" if it depends upon the concept of God for its motivating force than if it were dependent upon a hedonistic principle.[1] The moral law is not obligatory because God exists as the guarantor of personal happiness for the moral individual. God must exist because the moral law is a categorical command.[2]

As late as 1797, when he was already at work on the *Opus Postumum*, Kant flatly denied that he had introduced a hedonistic principle into his ethics. Reminding the reader of his distinction between pleasure as a motive of moral action and the pleasure which follows the law and results solely from the unconditional acceptance of its command, he adds: "If this distinction is not observed: if eudaemonism (the principle of happiness) is made the foundation instead of autonomy (the principle of freedom and self-lawgiving) the consequence is the euthanasia (the slow death) of all morality."[3] That he considered this to provide no difficulty with respect to the moral argument, is indicated by his reaffirmation in the same essay of the legitimacy and necessity of the hope for happiness.[4]

There is no evidence, so ar as I know, from any of Kant's writings prior to the *Opus Postumum* to support the contention that he ever became convinced of the inadequacy of his moral argument. Nor does Adickes claim that Kant found it necessary to modify his position on this point at any time before 1800. Adickes' contention that Kant repudiated the moral argument in the *Opus Postumum* is based upon three considerations: (1) that Kant failed to restate it; (2) that he declared that no proof of God's existence can be offered; (3) that he stated that God is directly and immediately revealed in the categorical imperative.

In regard to the first point, even if it were to be accepted it would provide only negative evidence for Adickes' thesis. On the basis of his interpretive principle the fact that Kant did not restate a view in the *Opus Postumum* is no indication that he had abandoned it. If other of his critical views are to be assumed as presupposed in the *Opus Postumum*, which appears to be a sound procedure, there is no reason to make an exception in this instance. Perhaps Adickes was persuaded to make this exception because of his conviction that this doctrine was incompatible with Kant's other views. Kant once observed that "we have nothing to fear from our enemies, since we are aware of them." "God protect us only from our friends. . . ."[5] It is from their well-intended efforts to assist us with modifications of our thought that we need to be saved. Kant had Fichte and those

[1] *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 5, pp. 119, 136.
[2] *Op. Post.*, v. 22, p. 106.
[3] *Werke*, v. 7, p. 186.
[4] *Werke*, v. 7, p. 298.
[5] *Öffnteliche Erklärungen*, w. v. 8, p. 156.

who would accommodate his philosophy to Fichte's views in mind when he made this statement. I think it may apply with equal force to Adickes' conscientious effort to render the Kantian philosophy more consistent and acceptable.

As a matter of fact, Kant did restate the moral argument in recognizable form in the seventh section of the *Opus Postumum.*

> The first question is: is there a moral, practical reason and together with this a concept of duty as a principle of freedom under laws, finally if there is a Substance which, according to these laws (in that they exculpate men or condemn them) judges them [men] to be worthy or unworthy of happiness and makes it possible for them to participate in it.[1]

I would not want to make too much of this passage, and certainly would not attempt to refute Adickes' interpretation solely on the basis of it. However, it does indicate that Kant was still thinking in terms of God as the guarantor of happiness for the moral individual.

The second point, that Kant admitted in the *Opus Postumum* that no proof of God's existence is possible[2] has already been answered. It assumes that Kant had originally considered the moral argument to be a theoretical proof of God's existence, which is not the case. If we are to employ the contextual principle of interpretation there is sufficient ground for assuming that Kant is not referring to the postulation of God by the practical reason, but rather to theoretical knowledge of God. One may argue that, in spite of Kant's repudiation of all theoretical arguments for the existence of God, his moral argument was itself in effect a theoretical argument. This is what Adickes maintains. But even so, Kant did not regard it as a theoretical proof. The question here is the meaning of the terms which Kant employs in the *Opus Postumum.* Does "provable" or "demonstrable" refer only to the theoretical reason or does it also include the practical reason? It can be nothing more than a speculative guess to assume that it now refers to the postulates of the practical reason. The further question is, what does Kant mean by the term "subjective"? If this term has the same meaning as in Kant's earlier writings, it clearly does not have the meaning which Adickes ascribes to it. It is a term which Kant employs to distinguish the postulates of moral faith from the concepts of theoretical knowledge. "It must be remarked that this moral necessity is subjective, that is, it is a want, and not objectlike, that is, itself a duty, for there cannot be a duty to assume the existence of anything (since this pertains only to the theoretical employment of reason)."[3] However, the

[1] *Op. Post.*, v. 22, p. 126; cf. v. 22, pp. 34, 120; v. 21, p. 23; *Über die Fortschritte*, w. v. 8, p. 218.

[2] "One cannot demonstrate the existence of God, but one cannot avoid proceeding according to such a principle and regarding all duties as divine commands." *Op. Post.*, v. 21, p. 15.

[3] *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 5, p. 136.

postulates of the practical reason, including the concept of freedom, do not depend upon psychological conviction or personal subjective faith. Kant's assertions in the *Opus Postumum* that faith in God is subjective may well be interpreted in the light of his customary employment of these terms. There is, in fact, strong evidence to support the conclusion that Kant meant them to retain their characteristic meaning.

With respect to the third point, two passages from the first and seventh sections of the *Opus Postumum* would seem to make it impossible to conclude that Kant had come to accept a personal subjective faith in God based upon a direct revelation in the categorical imperative.

> The reality of the concept of freedom cannot be presented or proven directly (immediately) but only indirectly through a mediating principle: and similarly the proposition: "there is a God," namely in the human, moral/practical reason, a determination of His activity in the knowledge of all human obligation as (*gleich als*) divine commands.[1]

On Adickes' interpretation this passage is altogether unintelligible. He attempts to deal with such passages by insisting that Kant is here speaking from a "strictly transcendental point of view."[2] To be sure he is speaking from a transcendental point of view. That is just the point! One finds, upon close examination, that Adickes is not actually maintaining that any change has occurred in Kant's critical or transcendental position. It is only that Kant is stating his inner personal convictions for the first time.[3] But if this is what is being claimed, it is trivial! There can be no doubt that Kant had always been convinced of the reality of God, even as he had been convinced of the independent existence of material objects.[4] One certainly does not have to turn to the *Opus Postumum* to find Kant's private philosophical views. His private views are clearly in evidence in many of his critical writings and must often be presupposed if his position is to be made intelligible. At certain points Kant had a struggle to reconcile his critical doctrines with his personal convictions. This cannot be denied. The question is whether the moral argument is one of these points. Adickes does not show that Kant recognized any such conflict or that he explicitly abandoned his critical position with regard to religious faith. He gives his case away in dismissing such passages as the one quoted above as representing Kant's transcendental point of view. The whole problem is whether

[1] *Op. Post.*, v. 21, p. 30; cf. v. 22, p. 120.

[2] Adickes, *Kant's Op. Post.*, pp. 802, 818.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 776, 785, 826.

[4] Cf. Adickes, "Die bewegenden Kräfte in Kant's phil. Entwicklung," *Kantstudien*, v. 1, p. 40; *Prolegomena*, Par. 49; *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xli, note, A 37, B 70; Heimsoeth, "Metaphysische Motive in der Ausbildung des Kritischen Idealismus," *Kantstudien*, v. 29.

Kant repudiated or modified his critical position. It is the latter point that Adickes is seeking to make, but only the former point that he does make—even if his conclusions are accepted.

But it may be doubted that Kant was even expressing the sort of "inner personal convictions" which Adickes attributes to him. He reaffirms in the *Opus Postumum* what he had maintained in the *Religion Innerhalb* and *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, namely that direct revelation of God could not be recognized as such even if it were possible.

> That no positive or negative command from a holy and powerful Being to men could actually be issued, that even if it occurred the men to whom it happened could not have recognized it and been persuaded of its authenticity, is beyond doubt. We are left with nothing more than the knowledge of our duty as commanded of God, which suffers not the slightest loss of authority because of the inevitable lack of knowledge of this proclamation. The moral imperative can thus be regarded as the voice of God.[1]

This passage is strikingly similar to a passage from *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, Kant's last systematic treatment of the subject.

> For if God actually spoke to Man, the latter could never know that it is God who has spoken to him. It is absolutely impossible, that Man should comprehend the infinite through his senses, that he should be able to distinguish Him from finite creatures and know how to recognize Him.—However, that it is not God whose voice he believes himself to have heard he can well be convinced in a given instance. For if that which is commanded is incompatible with the moral law, no matter how majestic it is and to what extent it seems to transcend the whole of nature, he must still regard it as a deception.[2]

The context of this treatise leaves the reader in no doubt as to Kant's position with regard to revelation. Religion, he reiterates here, is a "purely rational affair" (*eine reine Vernunftsache*). Yet one can find passages in this treatise which, if taken in isolation, appear to reflect quite a different point of view. "He now knows his duties as divine commands, and there arises in him a new knowledge, a new feeling, namely religion."[3]

Not only does Kant deny the possibility of a direct revelation of God in the *Opus Postumum*, but he continues to refer to God as a "necessary hypothesis." "The statement: there is a God is a necessary hypothesis of the pure practical reason." "These ideas of God and the world are necessary and contained *a priori* in reason. . . ."[4]

If Kant had actually given up any attempt to establish the existence of God as a postulate of the practical reason it is indeed curious

[1] *Op. Post.*, v. 22, p. 64; cf. v. 21, p. 74: "It is fanatical to claim or even to hope for an experience or perception of the Being of God or of an effect which could proceed only from Him"; cf. v. 22, p. 57.

[2] W. v. 7, p. 375; cf. p. 357.

[3] W. v. 7, d. 386; cf. *Von e. n. er. vor. Ton in der Phil.*, w. v. 6, 2. 492.

[4] *Op. Post.*, v. 21, pp. 151, 52; cf. v. 21, pp. 24, 143; v. 22, p. 117.

that he should continue to employ such language. The fact that he continues to refer to the moral-practical reason and to speak of God as revealed through the practical reason would seem to indicate that the faith to which he is referring is still a *Vernunftglaube*.[1] Moreover he repeatedly refers to the categorical imperative and the moral law *gleich als* the command of God, sometimes even employing the stronger phrase *als ob*.[2] It would make sense for Kant to retain the familiar terms *als*, *gleich als*, and *als ob* only if he continues to regard the moral law as an *indirect* revelation of God. That he should sometimes omit the qualifying "as" or "as if" would not seem to indicate that it is no longer presupposed, especially since he frequently employs these limiting phrases. I can see no ground whatever for making a distinction between the two forms of the statement, attributing the one to his transcendental point of view and the other to his "inner personal convictions." It is much less presumptuous to regard them both as on the same level.

It cannot be denied that Kant frequently refers to the categorical imperative as the "voice of God."[3] One way of explaining such statements would be to regard them as presupposing a qualifying *gleich als*. However, it is possible to deal with them more directly. Adickes seems to have overlooked the fact that such statements are not at all peculiar to the *Opus Postumum*. He fails to take into consideration Kant's carefully worked out distinction between morality and religion. From the point of view of religion it is quite proper, on Kant's analysis, to refer to the moral law as the "command" or even the "voice of God."[4] Morality, Kant had held, inevitably leads to religion; from the point of view of religion the moral law can be regarded in no other way than as the command of God.

> In this manner, by way of the concept of the highest good as the object and final purpose of the practical reason, the moral law leads to religion, that is, to the knowledge of all duties as divine commands. . . .[5]

We cannot very well clarify moral obligation, he maintained, without introducing the concept of God.[6] The categorical imperative is a revelation of God to man, but only an *indirect* revelation. It is from

[1] "It is only a practical-sufficient argument of faith in God which is insufficient for the theoretical reason—the knowledge of all human duties as (tanquam) divine commands." v. 22, p. 127; cf. v. 22, pp. 53, 60, 104 ff., 117, 122; v. 21, pp. 23, 143.

[2] *Op. Post.*, v. 21, pp. 15, 20, 22, 28, 30, 37, 74, 92; v. 22, pp. 51, 53, 56, 57, 104, 105, 109, 112 ff., 117 ff., 120, 127.

[3] *Op. Post.*, v. 22, pp. 55, 106, 109, 114, 124; v. 21, pp. 14, 17, 21, 56, 60, 113, 118, 143 ff., 149, 153, 157.

[4] Cf. *Religion Innerhalb*, v. 6, p. 292.

[5] *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 5, p. 140; cf. *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, w. v. 7, p. 302 ff.; *Religion Innerhalb*, v. 6, pp. 143 ff.

[6] *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, w. v. 7, p. 7, 303; cf. *Reflex.*, 6317, Ber.

the standpoint of religion that the moral law is to be regarded as the "voice of God." The passages in the *Opus Postumum* in which Kant makes such assertions are perfectly consistent with his critical position. This language was familiar enough even in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. In considering such statements, whether in his earlier writings or in the *Opus Postumum*—for the case is precisely the same in both instances, one must keep in mind Kant's distinction between the language of morality and the language of religion. From the perspective of religion the moral law is to be regarded as the revelation of God.[1] The moral law is the normative principle which must be employed in the formulation of any valid theology.[2] Religion, for Kant, consists in regarding one's moral duty as divinely commanded, directly and immediately.[3] But that is not to say that Kant regarded God as directly and immediately revealed in the moral law—or anywhere else in experience.

The only alternative to this interpretation would be the assumption that in the categorical imperative we have an experience of "numinousness" or of some other divine quality which immediately recommends itself as a revelation of God. In both *Der Streit der Fakultäten* and the *Opus Postumum* Kant denied that we can have any such criterion for the recognition of the divine. Apart from its agreement with the requirements of the practical reason, we have no basis for judging anything to be divine. The possibility of an irrational *a priori*, such as Otto's "numinous," or the mystic's intuition, which might, in conjunction with the categorical imperative, determine it as divine, is ruled out. The *a priori* for Kant is not irrational but rational. As Adickes himself had pointed out in another connection, the *a priori* is "the form in which Kant rationalized the irrational sufficiently to incorporate it into his system."[4] It was not without studied purpose that Kant employed the terms "practical reason" and "rational faith" in referring to the postulates of morality. However inadequate one may believe Kant's position to be in this regard, there is no basis for the assumption that in any of his writings, including the *Opus Postumum*, he rejected the rational *a priori* with respect to religion, and substituted for it a subjective criterion such as "numinousness" or feeling.

[1] *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, w. v. 7, pp. 347, 379; *Religion Innerhalb*, w. v. 6, d. 290; *Vor. über phil. Religionslehre*, p. 220.

[2] *Uber die Fortschritte*, w. v. 8, p. 296; *Über das Misslingen*, w. v. 6, p. 124; *Vor. über phil. Rel.*, pp. 16 ff., 145; *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 815–B 843, A 819–B 847; *Critique of Practical Reason*, w. v. 5, pp. 133, 136, 142, note; *Reflex.*, 6254, 6317, 8110, Ber.

[3] "Consequently the moral individual thinks of all duties after the formula (of religion) as divine commands." *Op. Post.*, v. 22, p. 120; cf. pp. 56, 108, 17, 122; v. 21, pp. 15, 28; *Religion Innerhalb*, v. 6, p. 249.

[4] Adickes, *Kant und die als ob Philosophie*, p. 271.

PRESUMED REPUDIATION OF THE "MORAL ARGUMENT"

In all of his critical writings Kant had sought to avoid subjectivity in our knowledge. The originality of his critical method, had, in large part, depended upon the specification of the "transcendental" factors which are universal and necessary, the *a priori* conditions of objective "experience." Even in the case of aesthetic experience he had been unwilling to admit that there are no formal or *a priori* principles involved. Faith in God, he insistently maintained, is not dependent upon special historical revelation, nor upon a direct personal revelation.[1] It is based solely upon the moral practical reason. Adickes' interpretation would require us to assume that in the last three or four years of his life Kant had lost his distaste for subjectivity and was willing to base religion upon subjective personal experience. While this is not impossible, it is highly improbable and would require far more decisive evidence than Adickes is able to muster in support of it.[2]

[1] *Critique of Pure Reason*, w. v. 5, p. 131; *Was heisst: sich im D. orientieren?* w. v. 4, d. 360 ff.; *Das Ende aller Dinge*, w. v. 6, p. 420; *Von e. n. er. vor. Ton in der Phil.*, w. v. 6, pp. 487, 492; *Religion Innerhalb*, w. v. 6, pp. 193, 285. As late as 1800 Kant referred to mysticism as self-contradictory and based upon an "esoteric doctrine which is the direct opposite of all philosophy." W. v. 8, p. 230; cf. *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, w. v. 7, p. 387.

[2] Cf. Kant's *Öffentliche Erklärungen*, August 7, 1799. Here Kant declared that the critical philosophy, in both its theoretical and practical parts was in need of no modification, but rests on a "fully secured foundation." W. v. 8, p. 516.

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ETHICS AND POLITICS IN MANDEVILLE

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Ever since they were first published, the works of Bernard Mandeville have met with a few careful readers as well as with a larger number of stupid or unscrupulous assailants. Both classes are faithfully recorded at the end of F. B. Kaye's splendid edition of *The Fable of the Bees* (Oxford, 1924), which has helped to revive interest in Mandeville, and which has moulded the current estimate of his ideas: the treatment of Mandeville in such a work as Basil Willey's *Eighteenth Century Background* (London, 1940) is confessedly based almost entirely on Kaye. My purpose in this paper is to suggest some modifications of the account given by Kaye, and to make claims for Mandeville's importance in one particular field, the relation of ethics to politics.

The question of Mandeville's sincerity in the views he expresses is one which it is not very profitable to discuss. There is no doubt that he enjoyed shocking the respectable and displaying his satirical talents. But his interest in intellectual problems for their own sake is equally clearly genuine, and his system is worth discussing whether or not he wholeheartedly believed in it himself. From this point of view, it is a little unfortunate that Mandeville's most sprightly, readable and racy work, the first volume of the *Fable*,[1] is one which was written piecemeal, and with less than his customary regard for logical consistency. It is fairer to judge him on his more systematic works, the second volume of the *Fable*, the *Origin of Honour*, the *Free Thoughts*, and the *Letter to Dion*. These would never have been written if Mandeville had been a mere intellectual playboy, and the later of them correct the first volume of the *Fable* on several points.

Kaye considers the main antithesis in Mandeville's moral theory to be that between the traditional rigorism he assumes for controversial and satirical purposes and the utilitarianism which he adopts as a practical criterion. He does not dismiss the rigorism as a complete sham, but he finds Mandeville's real views in his utilitarianism. "Mandeville's philosophy," he writes, "forms a complete whole without the extraneous rigorism" (I, lvi). I am not satisfied that

[1] The first spate of attacks came before the publication of the second volume (1729). Berkeley's *Alciphron*, though not published till 1732, betrays no knowledge of anything by Mandeville except the first volume of the *Fable*; in fact Mandeville in the *Letter to Dion* (London, 1732) is well within his rights in questioning whether Berkeley has read even the first volume. Berkeley never wrote anything that is less to his credit than his attack on Mandeville, and Mandeville's reply is admirably cool and good-tempered.

this does justice to Mandeville. For one thing, rigorism and utilitarianism are not really alternative theories about the same thing. Rigorism is a doctrine of motive. Mandeville's rigorism comes out primarily in his opposition to Shaftesbury, and in his insistence that there can be no virtue without self-denial. It in no way provides a criterion of right action. There would be no inconsistency for Mandeville in being completely rigoristic in his criterion for judging the morality (the virtue) of the agent and completely utilitarian in his criterion for judging what, in a particular situation, the agent ought to do. He does not, in fact, take that line in his ethical theory, but he is not prevented from doing so by his rigorism as such. To say that virtue necessarily involves self-denial is not to say anything about *what* a virtuous man will do.

In arguing his thesis of "Private Vices Public Benefits," Mandeville does not adopt a utilitarian criterion for the content of virtuous behaviour on the part of the individual. His ethics are not only rigoristic, but also ascetic.[1] Hence the charges brought against him by Johnson and Adam Smith, among others, of achieving his paradox by means of a false, or vague, definition of vice. Mandeville's chief defect here is not so much exaggerated asceticism, which could easily be allowed for, as failure to adhere to a consistent definition of vice. If all he meant by vice was any action not prompted by a pure sense of duty, then it would be trivial, and not at all shocking, to say that vice was a necessary condition of public welfare, as usually understood. It is clear that Mandeville did assert this, and not merely, as he rather disingenuously claimed, that vice could by skilful management be turned to the public benefit.[2] There are really at least four classes of actions discussed by Mandeville and set over against genuine (self-denying) virtue: (1) recognized vices, condemned even by our semi-Christian standards; (2) actions which are anti-Christian but condoned and even commanded by the social code (e.g. duelling and warfare); (3) anti-ascetic satisfactions of non-moral impulses (luxury); (4) actions which are in accordance with duty but which there is reason to believe are not prompted by duty: an example Mandeville uses is that of the perfect gentleman who shows that he is not a really conscientious Christian by fighting a duel. The border-line between (3) and (4) is a shifting one, and

[1] Kaye (I, xlviii) treats rigorism as a "blend of asceticism and rationalism." I do not think that this is a good analysis of what Kaye himself means by the various terms. In practice his description of the relation of rigorism to asceticism, where he makes a clear distinction between them, is much the same as mine.

[2] I, 369 (= 428); 411–2 (= 476). All references to the *Fable* are to Kaye's edition. I give in brackets Kaye's marginal references, which refer to the pagination of the 1723, 1724, 1725, 1728 and 1732 editions of the first volume and to the 1729 and 1733 editions of the second volume.

Mandeville's asceticism leads him to enlarge (3) at the expense of (4), though he stresses the importance of (4) in places where he wants to show how perfectly self-interest can on occasion simulate genuine virtue.

The failure in consistency in Mandeville's account is due not only to his primarily satirical intention, but also to the interplay of rigorism and asceticism. Mandeville shares with most of his early critics a rigoristic account of virtue. They sometimes accuse him of making it a necessary condition of the virtuousness of every single action that it should be done contrary to natural inclination, but I do not think that this charge can be sustained; he does however hold that, human nature being what it is, the habit of virtuous action can scarcely ever be acquired. He is particularly hostile to all attempts to draw an analogy between the goodness of God and human virtue. William Law, pleading for the naturalness of virtue, wrote in his criticism of the first volume of the *Fable*:

> Now will anyone say that there is no Excellence in Virtue, that it is mere *Nature* and *Temper*, because it is so agreeable, so proper to our rational Natures? Then let him say there is no Excellence in the Goodness and Justice of God, because it is so suitable to his Nature, and constitutes his Happiness. (*Remarks*, London, 1724, pp. 32–33.)

Mandeville's retort was:

> The Holiness of God, and all his Perfections, as well as the Beatitude he exists in, belong to his Nature; and there is no Virtue but what is acquired. (*Origin of Honour*, London, 1732, Preface, p. ix.)

Law, then, is less ascetic though not less rigoristic than Mandeville. Law's indignation cannot be attributed as much as Kaye thinks to a sense that Mandeville is drawing unwelcome conclusions from premisses which they hold in common. Law is in the tradition of Hooker and the Cambridge Platonists, Mandeville in the tradition of Calvin. Law regards himself as a defender of human nature against Mandeville's degrading estimate:

> Should I now lament the miserable Fruits of *Free-thinking* . . . tho' as a Friend of Religion I might be censur'd by *some*, yet surely as an advocate for the Dignity of Man, I might be pardon'd by *all*. (*Remarks*, p. 95.)

Mandeville saw clearly that Law's views on reason had to be combated, and his answer to one (not necessarily the most important) of Law's rationalist arguments is devastating. Law had written:

> As Truth and Reason can never cease to be, so it implies a Contradiction in terms, for Truth and Reason ever to have had a Beginning.
>
> It is the same in moral Virtue, which is *Truth* and *Reason*, consider'd in relation to Actions; and the difference between one Action and another, is as immutable and eternal, as the difference between one Line and another, and can no more be destroy'd. (*Remarks*, pp. 22–23.)

Mandeville replies:

> All Propositions, not confin'd to Time or Place, that are once true, must be always so; even in the silliest and most abject Things in the World; as for Example; It is wrong to under-roast Mutton for People who love to have their Meat well done. The Truth of this, which is the most trifling Thing I can readily think on, is as much Eternal, as that of the Sublimest Virtue. If you ask me, where this Truth was, before there was Mutton, or People to dress or eat it, I answer, in the same Place where Chastity was, before there were any Creatures that had an Appetite to procreate their Species. (*Origin of Honour*, Preface, p. xiii.)[1]

This is the best place at which to point out that Mandeville's ethical theory is not at any point sceptical, relativist or Pyrrhonist, as critics from the earliest times down to and beyond Kaye have claimed. The allegations are entirely based on one sentence, which recurs with monotonous regularity in the critics. In arguing against Shaftesbury's assimilation of moral to aesthetic judgments, Mandeville describes at some length the fluctuations of fashion, and then continues, "In Morals there is no greater Certainty." (I, 330 = 379.) It is perfectly clear from the context that this, and the elaboration of it which follows, is simply part of the *reductio ad absurdum* of Shaftesbury's ethical theory, but as far as I know only one critic has pointed this out.[2] Comparison with the second quotation given above from the *Origin of Honour* shows that Mandeville does not deny the objectivity and universality of ethical propositions, only the notion of a hypostatized, or subsistent, Truth and Virtue.

From the point of view of the virtue of the individual, then, we have a sharp distinction between genuine self-denying virtue which, Mandeville maintains as a separate contention, will manifest itself in ascetic behaviour, and all other actions whatsoever. But not all that is not virtuous in this sense is vicious either in common parlance or, consistently, in Mandeville's own language. There is the whole range of innocent, but not virtuous, natural inclinations. Mandeville aroused considerable indignation by denying the virtuousness of natural sympathy and, in particular, of parental affection. His language is sometimes provocative, but the distinction he makes is surely a just one. A natural inclination, as such, is neither virtuous nor vicious; and Mandeville never denies that it can be amiable, and pleasing to contemplate. As he says (I, 79 = 72), "it is very Advantageous to the Knowledge of our selves, to be able well to distinguish between good Qualities and Virtues." (Compare also I, 369 = 428.) The fact that none of them are virtuous gives an excuse for classing together the four kinds of action distinguished

[1] Neither in this nor the other passage quoted from this Preface does Mandeville mention Law, but there can be no doubt that he is answering him.

[2] W. Deckelmann in *Untersuchungen zur Bienenfabel* (Hamburg, 1933), p. 128; an excellent monograph, the only substantial study since Kaye.

above, and there is a tendency to use the provocative description, "vice," as a generic term.

The parts of the *Fable* in which Mandeville treats vice in the ordinary sense as a condition of economic welfare do not concern me here. Along with the more general economic defence of luxury, they have had their fair share of attention. Mandeville never seriously denies the importance for a civilized society of the stability that can only come from at least apparent virtue, and the most impressive part of his psychological analysis is his account of the building up of the habits of tolerable social behaviour on the basis of primitive and self-regarding impulses. In this account he comes half-way between Hobbes and Rousseau. In Hobbes the change from the state of nature to civil society involves no psychological transformation. Moral obligation in civil society is, for Hobbes, something genuine and *sui generis*, but the beings who are obliged are the same as they were in the state of nature. The moral law is a command imposed on them from the outside. For Rousseau, on the other hand, man in the state of civil liberty is a different being from what he was in the state of natural independence, and a higher being (*Contrat Social*, I, 8). Mandeville's account of the progress of society allows for a genuine advance in "artificial virtue," but the basic assumptions on which he works admit only the stark Calvinist antithesis of absolutely corrupt nature, and grace; and the state of grace, whether or not Mandeville as an individual still believes in it as a reality, has no bearing on politics. Mandeville, then, is prevented by his inherited theology from admitting that man in society is radically different from natural man, but in practice he depicts him as having made a considerable advance. The second volume of the *Fable* is the main text for this side of Mandeville's thought.

What is the place of utilitarianism in Mandeville? It is true enough to say that there is a utilitarian flavour about the way he discusses social problems, but that is rather too vague. And unfortunately Kaye is not at his best in discussing utilitarianism as a doctrine. At one point (I, lix) he refers us to four passages for utilitarianism in Mandeville. The first of these asserts that "when we pronounce Actions good or evil, we only regard the Hurt or Benefit the Society receives from them, and not the Person who commits them" (I, 244 = 272); the second that "Man centers every thing in himself, and neither loves nor hates, but for his own Sake . . . in the Choice of Things Men must be determin'd by the Perception they have of Happiness" (II, 178 = 196); the third and fourth maintain the doctrine that God's laws have "a regard to the Good of Society, and the temporal Happiness of his People" (II, 282 = 333; cf. 283 = 335). No one of those three propositions implies either of the other two. Our examination, therefore, will have to make a fresh start.

Mandeville certainly has a strong interest in questions of utility: a tendency to speculate on what are the consequences of such-and-such an action and the necessary conditions of such-and-such a state of affairs. This interest in itself implies no ethical theory, and Mandeville can consistently claim: "If I have shewn the way to worldly Greatness, I have always without Hesitation preferr'd the Road that leads to Virtue" (I, 231 = 258). His tone, as his early critics noted, was not so sternly moral as his overt pronouncements, but levity of tone does not in itself constitute a man a pioneer of utilitarianism. From the point of view of theory, what is most interesting in Mandeville is the distinction between morals and politics, and it is here that a genuinely utilitarian doctrine can be found in his work.

Mandeville's views on the responsibilities of the statesman are, in detail, somewhat fluctuating. In his more *laissez-faire* manner, he insists that beneficial results can be and are achieved with much less deliberate statesmanship than the vulgar are apt to suppose. The regulations necessary for the government of a flourishing city need time and pains to work out, but "when once they are brought to as much Perfection, as Art and human Wisdom can carry them, the whole Machine may be made to play of itself, with as little Skill, as is required to wind up a Clock" (II, 323 = 388). When he argues (I, 316 ff. = 362 ff.) for more positive direction, it is, as Deckelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 69, points out, only to counteract the effect of misguided interference with the natural course of things. There are passages in which he seems to allot a more positive role to statesmanship, but these divergences do not affect his *criterion* for the action (or inaction) of the statesman, which is a purely utilitarian one. "It is the Business of all Law-givers to watch over the Publick Welfare, and, in order to procure that, to submit to any Inconveniency, any Evil, to prevent a much greater, if it is impossible to avoid that greater Evil at a cheaper Rate." (*Letter to Dion*, pp. 42–3.) This is not inconsistent with rigorism or even with asceticism. Not with rigorism, because, as I have said, that is purely a doctrine of motive: a statesman, like anyone else, ought to act from a pure, self-denying motive, but that does not prescribe what measures he ought to take. Not even with asceticism: men ought to suppress all desires for anything beyond bare necessities, but in fact they want a great deal more, and we find that God's laws have "a regard to the Good of Society, and the temporal Happiness of his People" (II, 282 = 333). Now a statesman is a man whose particular function is to promote the public welfare—not what would be the public welfare if man were virtuous, but what is in fact the welfare of fallen man with his inordinate desires. Hence though he ought to be ascetic himself, it is not his duty to promote asceticism in the community as a whole.

I agree that this scheme is not found in so many words in Mandeville; I agree also that Mandeville himself might smile a little at being taken so solemnly; but I would maintain that this interpretation makes him more nearly consistent with himself than any other. The distinction between private and public morality—not, of course, in itself a novel one—is quite explicitly made in the passage cited from the *Letter to Dion*, which goes on to give as an instance of behaviour justifiable in a legislature but not in a private individual the offering of pardons to felons who will impeach their accomplices: it is no good saying that the legislators have in mind the possibility that the felons will do so for good motives: "Those who would impeach Others from a Motive of Conscience, and a Sense of their Duty, were not the Men the Legislature had in View" (p. 44). Another relevant passage comes in a work which, though anonymous, is almost certainly by Mandeville,[1] *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews* (London, 1724):

> First then, I expect to be attack'd with that old moral Precept, of *Not doing Evil that Good may come of it*. This may be answer'd with another old Saying, equally authentick, and more applicable to the present Purpose, that *of two Evils we ought to chuse the least.*

A private person, Mandeville continues, is justly condemned for committing a crime in order to promote the good of society,

> But as to the *Legislature*, there is a wide Difference; for they, and they only, are entrusted with the Welfare of the *Society*: This Publick Welfare is, or ought to be, the whole End and Scope of their Actions; and they are fully impower'd to do whatever they judge conducive to that End . . . it is the grossest Absurdity, and a perfect Contradiction in Terms, to assert, That a *Government* may not commit Evil that Good may come of it; for, if a Publick Act, taking in all its Consequences, really produces a greater Quantity of Good, it must, and ought to be term'd a good Act; altho' the bare Act, consider'd in itself, without the consequent Good, should be in the highest Degree wicked and unjust. (Pp. 67–8.)

Mandeville does not rest in this pure utilitarianism, but puts forward another objection:

> Another Objection, or rather the same set in a stronger Light, is, That altho' the Welfare and Happiness of the Community is, or ought to be, the only End of all Law and Government, yet since our spiritual Welfare is the *Summum Bonum* which all Christians should aim at, no Christian Government ought to authorize the Commission of the least known Sin, tho' for the greatest temporal Advantage.
>
> To this Objection, I answer, That it is universally allow'd as one of the greatest Perfections of the Christian Religion, That its Precepts are calculated to promote the Happiness of Mankind in this World as well as the next; if so, then it is a direct Arraignment of the Lawgivers infinite Wisdom, i.e. a

[1] See Kaye, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 20 (1921), 451–6; and R. S. Crane, *Philological Quarterly* 13 (1934), 122–3.

> Contradiction to assert, that, in Matters of Law and Government, the Publick Breach of any Gospel Precept can possibly be for the temporal Good of any *Society* whatever: And therefore we may with Confidence affirm, that no sinful Laws can be beneficial, and *vice versa*, that no beneficial Laws can be sinful (p. 69).

Mandeville meets this difficulty about his proposal for authorized brothels by the principle:

> Since the Sin of the Intention [which for religion is the really important thing] is entirely out of the *Legislature's* Power, the utmost they can do, with regard to this Sin, is, to prevent its being aggravated by actual Commission (p. 70).

and he claims that his proposal will lessen the commission of sin.

It is not necessary to rule out the idea that Mandeville's tongue was in his cheek. Moreover, whatever may be the case with the particular subject he is dealing with, the quotation from p. 69 leaves standing the general epistemological difficulty: where an apparently sinful law is apparently beneficial, is there any general rule by which we can determine which of the appearances is deceptive? None the less the whole argument is a particularly interesting illustration of the liberalizing effect of the type of extreme Calvinism to which Mandeville is in theory committed. It can be generalized as follows: since man, in the state of nature, is entirely corrupt, a legislature can never, properly speaking, be said to promote or encourage sin; men will sin in any case, and it is the legislator's sole business to prevent their sin from being harmful to society. The underlying doctrine is clearly stated by Bayle in a passage quoted, in the contemporary English translation which Mandeville certainly used, by Kaye (I, civ.):

> That considering the Doctrine of Original Sin, and that of the Necessity and Inamissibility of Grace, decided at the Synod of *Dort*, every reform'd Protestant is oblig'd to believe, that all, except the predestin'd, whom God regenerates and sanctifys, are incapable of acting out of a Principle of Love to God, or resisting their Corruptions from any other Principle than that of Self-love and human Motives (*Miscellaneous Reflections*, London, 1708, II, 545).

So in Mandeville himself: "it is impossible that Man, mere fallen Man, should act with any other View but to please himself" (I, 348 = 401).

It ought now to be possible to see that rigorism and utilitarianism in Mandeville are by no means such conflicting tendencies as appears in an account such as that of Kaye. Though Mandeville's intellectual background lies much more in continental than in English Calvinism—Bayle is by far the greatest single influence, as contemporary critics realized, and as Kaye and, more fully, Deckelmann, have shown—yet there is a remarkable similarity in practical outcome

between Mandeville's liberalism and the political theory of puritans such as Roger Williams, which Professor A. S. P. Woodhouse has called the "principle of segregation." (*Puritanism and Liberty*, London, 1938, Introduction, especially pp. [*85–6*].) Mandeville is more extreme than Williams in that he does not even admit the "indirect influence of analogy" (p. [*60*]) between the orders of grace and nature. The importance of this puritan principle in the development of modern democratic theory has been stressed by A. D. Lindsay in *The Modern Democratic State*, Vol. I (London, 1943), pp. 84–89 and 115–21.[1] The segregation of grace and nature is as important for Mandeville as it is for Roger Williams (for I would maintain that the logical structure of Mandeville's system does not depend on whether he still believed in its theological foundation). This is not to say that their ideas about the order of nature are identical: what is common to both is the conviction that the order of nature is autonomous. As Deckelmann puts it (*op. cit.*, p. 111): "for Mandeville true virtue is a limiting case which lies outside the compass of society; the basis of the community is the self-seeking impulse of mankind"; and with more specific reference to Calvinist dogma (pp. 100–1): "while Max Weber investigates the influences on the *attitude* of man to economic life which follow from the dogma (of predestination), we believe that we can here, in an individual case, establish the influences of this dogma on economic theory (on Mandeville as a pioneer of economic liberalism); the behaviour of the non-predestinate is assumed as the basis of economic life."

Mandeville does not always clearly distinguish between the various considerations which make the utilitarian procedure the proper one for the statesman; it depends on his immediate purpose whether he lays more stress on the rarity of true virtue (which involves that the statesman, who deals with men in the mass, will do well to ignore it), or, in his more constructive mood, on the success with which the self-regarding passions can, in the evolution of society, come to produce the same external results that would be produced by true virtue (which enforces the point that for the statesman the distinction between true and apparent virtue, even if discoverable, would be irrelevant). But the upshot for policy is the same in any case.

[1] These pages provide the most helpful guide to the intellectual context in which I am claiming an important place for Mandeville. I do not, however, accept the view that Hobbes "denied the independent existence of ethics" (p. 84). On this, A. E. Taylor's two papers, in *Philosophy* for 1938, and in *Seventeenth Century Studies Presented to Sir Herbert Grierson* (Oxford, 1938), should be consulted. The place of *toleration* in the development is important: no one can read the *Free Thoughts* without seeing that, wherever else he may be flippant or disingenuous, this was a topic on which Mandeville, like Bayle, really felt deeply.

The notion of the statesman as a special kind of man, with an *ex officio* concern for public welfare, is perhaps not very fully worked out by Mandeville, but I think it is there. It is not that he either expects or demands that politicians should in fact be more disinterested than anyone else. But the content of their duty (which they, like anyone else, will, unless in a state of grace, fulfil only from selfish motives) is different. They ought to aim at the temporal good of society as a whole, whereas the private citizen ought simply to follow the precepts of the moral law. (What he will *in fact* do is to follow his own selfish desires and consequently provide the raw material for the statesman's—largely negative—ordering of society as a whole.) The distinction between the functional and the personal way of looking at any individual (a distinction which applies to the statesman as much as to anyone else) is stated in an extraordinarily interesting passage of the *Free Thoughts*:

> All men ought to be consider'd two different ways.
>
> *First*, as to their occupation, the station of life, which either choice or necessity has put them in. And here we chiefly mind the usefulness and dignity of their callings, their capacities, with all qualifications requir'd for the exercise or performance of their functions. In this view we have no regard for the persons themselves, but only the benefit they may be of to the publick, if they please and their service be wanted; and they are only look'd upon as parts and members of the whole society.
>
> *Secondly*, every person is to be consider'd as an entire individual, a wonderful machine, endued with thought and a will independent of any thing visible from without. In this view we look upon him as a necessitous being, subject to hunger and thirst, and having many passions to gratify, and at the same time a vast compound, a lesser world, with a sovereignty, and court of judicature within, having a private welfare and preservation of his own to mind, altogether abstract from the good of the publick.
>
> Men are naturally selfish, unruly, and head-strong creatures, what makes them sociable is their necessity and consciousness of standing in need of each others help, to make life comfortable; and what makes this assistance voluntarily given and lasting, are the gains or profit accruing to industry for services it does to others, which in a well order'd society enables every body, who in some thing or other will be serviceable to the publick, to purchase the assistance of others in other instances. And as all the conveniencies, and chief comforts of life depend, in a great measure, on the labour and the services of others, so he that is able to purchase most of them, is in the vogue of the world reckoned the most happy.
>
> . . . All the world agrees, that the good of the whole society, or the majority of it, ought to be preferr'd to the advantages of private persons, yet every body may find, that he loves himself better than he does all the rest of mankind. Nay, we are taught to do so from our infancy; the first thing our nurses bid us is to take care of our selves. . . .
>
> . . . most men have in all ages beheld themselves in the second view, and every body looks upon his own dear person, as an individual, if not independent being, which he is oblig'd every way to gratify and take care of, very often forgetting that they are members of the society. (Ed. 2, 1729, pp. 282–5. The passage is not altered from the first edition of 1720.)

The statesman is the only man whose function it is to consider *other* members of society in their functional aspect. This is, I think, quite a subtle and fruitful idea, though I would not claim that it is universally present in Mandeville's thought. It is, for instance, unfortunate that in one of the most obtrusively placed passages of his work (*Fable*, I, 42–50 = 28–35), Mandeville gives the impression of committing himself to the crudest form of the view that virtue was the invention of politicians, considered as cunning beings moulding society from the outside. This passage met with keen and skilful criticism both from William Law and from the anonymous author (generally considered to have been called George Bluett) of the *Enquiry whether a general Practice of Virtue tends to the Wealth or Poverty . . . of a People* (London, 1725). Mandeville profited by their criticisms in the second volume of the *Fable*, but it is clear from the *Free Thoughts* that he had already advanced in 1720 beyond the views which he held or appeared to hold in 1714.[1]

I am well aware that there are passages in Mandeville which give the impression of a much more light-heartedly cynical attitude to the contrast between ethical professions and political reality than I have sketched here. This side of Mandeville's thought is concentrated in the brilliant Parable of Small Beer with its ironic introduction. (I, 234 ff. = 261 ff.) But the more constructive ideas are not there by chance. In the field of political theory I would claim for Mandeville two interesting ideas: the idea of a utilitarian politics logically independent of any particular theory of individual ethics (an idea ultimately dependent, historically speaking, on a Calvinist segregation of grace and nature), and the idea of a sharp contrast between the personal and the functional aspect of all members of society, with a special class of persons, the politicians, whose task it is to take the functional viewpoint.

[1] The essentials of his general thesis in the *Fable*, and of the attitude towards the statesman which I have described, had been developed as early as 1709 if P. B. Anderson, *Philological Quarterly* 15 (1936), 297–8, is right in attributing to Mandeville certain papers, especially Nos. 62 and 64, of the *Female Tatler*: and the internal evidence seems to me quite irresistible. I quote from No. 64: "The jarring Discord of Contraries makes the Harmony of the whole, it is the Business of the Skilful Politician, to make every thing serve in its proper Place, and extract good from the very worst, as well as the best. Those that have Justice and Integrity he makes Judges . . . but of Villians that delight in Tears and Cruelty, he makes Jaylers. . . . Those that are really Honest, and without Ambition or any other Vice, contented with the Station they are in, he Praises, but lets them alone." The general tone here is less *laissez-faire* than it usually is in the *Fable*.

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DOING MY DUTY

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In this paper, I want to show, by the examination of a well-known paradox, how failure to attend to ordinary usage leads to confusion and perplexity.

In Chapter VII of his *Foundations of Ethics*, Ross says ". . . the question remains, which of the characteristics—objective or subjective rightness—is ethically the more important, which of the two acts (i.e. the "objectively" or the "subjectively right" act) is that which we ought to do?" (p. 147). And further on, he confesses that while in his earlier book *The Right and the Good*, he had thought that it was the "objectively right" act which we ought to do, Prichard's arguments in *Duty and Ignorance of Fact* had convinced him that it was really the "subjectively right" act which we ought to do. The paradox I refer to arises as follows. Suppose that someone has in fact been commissioned to book ten bus tickets for a trip from Oxford to Cambridge for the 13th of June. Suppose that he undertakes to carry out the commission. It is then his duty (it is the "objectively right" act) to get the tickets for the 13th of June. Suppose now that, through no fault of his, he misunderstands the date and thinks it is the 15th of June. He will then think it his duty (it will be the "subjectively right" act) to get the tickets for the 15th. Suppose now that he is getting them for the 15th. Was he doing his duty? We cannot say he was doing his duty, because it was his duty to get the tickets for the 13th and he has got them for the 15th. Nor can we say that he was not doing his duty, for he did not know that it was his duty to get them for the 13th. Yet it seems that we must say the one or the other. What are we to say in such cases?

1. The paradox arises when we try to answer Ross' and Prichard's question, "which of the two acts, the subjectively or the objectively right act is the one which we ought to do?" I emphasize "we," because it conceals an important ambiguity: that the question may be a moral agent's question, "which of the two acts is the one which I ought to do?" or an onlooker's question, "which of the two acts is the one which Jones ought to do?"

My first point is that, for a moral agent, this question cannot arise. When he asks himself "which of the two acts, the one I think right or the one which is really right, is the one which I ought to do?" he is not asking a question about two acts which he may distinguish. He cannot distinguish these two acts, because they are not, for an agent, genuine alternatives. An agent cannot distinguish between the act which he, perhaps erroneously, thinks right and the act which is

really right. The agent must think that act right which he thinks really right. He cannot truly say "I believe what I think (or know) to be false." Unless the act which is really right is another act than that which the agent thinks right, the agent could not have made a mistake about which is the right act. But making a mistake presupposes that the maker of the mistake is ignorant of the mistake, or else he would no longer make a mistake. And if he is ignorant of the fact that there are two different acts, he cannot distinguish them. This seems to me obvious beyond dispute.

But the subjective interpretation (Ross' and Prichard's view) overlooks this obvious fact. It overlooks that the question which Ross and Prichard formulate cannot arise for any moral agent, whatever interpretation one may give to duty. They wrongly think that, on the objective interpretation of duty, this question arises for a moral agent. Ross, therefore, thinks that, in order to make it impossible for this question to arise for any moral agent, one must give "duty" a subjective interpretation. On their view, one must say that whatever a man thinks his duty, really is his duty; that no one can make a mistake about what is his duty. They admit, of course, that there is a difference between the objectively right and the subjectively right act, but not between the act which is objectively and that which is subjectively the agent's duty. What is subjectively an agent's duty, also really is his duty. Thus no one may ever come to *realize* that he *erroneously* thought an act his duty, though he may, of course, come to realize that he erroneously thought an act wrong. Thus Ross, approvingly quoting Prichard, says (*Foundations of Ethics*, pp. 152–3): "Even when we try to change someone else's mind about a duty, we do not really imply the objective view. 'This is shown by our thinking that when our attempt to change his opinion about the facts is over, then, whether we have or have not succeeded, the question whether he is bound to do the action will turn on the nature of his *opinion* about the facts.' We are not really trying to convince him that his duty is not what he thinks it is, but, thinking, that his doing of his duty would result in very bad consequences, we try to put him in a different state of opinion on the facts, a state of opinion in which an act which we think will have good consequences will have *become* his duty, because his opinion about the facts has changed." But this "interpretation of 'duty' " is plainly false. We would have to say the absurd thing that an act which is thought right, but is really wrong, was really our duty, and not merely what we justifiably or excusably thought our duty. It would prevent us from saying, e.g. "I thought it was my duty to lock the gate, but it was not really" or "I found out it was not really my duty to lock the gate." Instead, we would have to say, what is quite a different matter, "I had a duty to lock the gate and now I don't have one."

And most seriously of all, there is not, on this view, as far as I can see, any way of stating what we frequently do state, that a man had done something which he thought was his duty, but which, since it was not really his duty, *he need not have done.*

It seems to me clear, then, that the subjective interpretation is false. What, we may ask, has led an objectivist like Ross to accept such an unplausible view? I think the reason is that he misunderstood the nature of the question he asked. As I have already said, he thought his question was one which arose for every agent, whereas of course it cannot arise for any agent. It is worth investigating what prevented Ross from seeing this.

An obvious reason is that there is a factual question similar to Ross' question, a question which may very well arise for an agent. Suppose someone has been granted a divorce from his wife. He wishes to keep the children and thinks it right that he should keep them, wrong that his wife should. The judge decides differently. There are then before the agent two genuinely different acts, to keep the children, and to hand them over to his wife. There is a proper sense in which he may describe the first, keeping the children, as "doing what *I* think right" (with the emphasis on "I," not on "think"), and handing over the children as "what the judge thinks right" or perhaps as "what is really right," in the sense of "what is really in accordance with the law." Suppose that he comes to the conclusion that he ought to keep the children, then he might describe this as having come to the conclusion that "I ought to do what I think is right and not what is really right." But, of course, this is very different from Ross' case. Here the man is confronted by two different courses of action, one of which he must choose. The fact that these courses are respectively what he thinks right and what someone else thinks right, are no more than further considerations in his choice. It is a genuine, if silly question to ask "Ought I always to do what I think right, or ought I always to do what someone else thinks right, say my father, my commanding officer, the King, etc.?" But here the alternatives are between what different people think right, not between what I think right and what is really right.

There are other reasons. There are yet two other questions which may arise for an agent and which are very similar to Ross' double-barrelled question which may not arise for an agent. An agent may ask himself the question "What ought I to do?" and also the question "What do I think I ought to do?" It may be admitted that the second of these questions is an unnatural one, but it is not meaningless. It is unnatural for this reason. In the first place, it can be asked only when the first question "What ought I to do?" has already been answered, at least provisionally, by the agent. For until the agent has answered this other first question, he cannot be said to think

about any action that it is the one he ought to do. But when he has given an answer to this other, first question, he also normally knows *what* answer he has given to it and, therefore, he also knows the answer to the second question "What do I think I ought to do?" It is, therefore, unnatural for him to ask himself the second question, though it is quite natural for someone else to ask it of him, i.e. to ask him what he thinks he ought to do. But while it is normally unnatural for him to ask the second question, he may sometimes quite naturally ask it, namely, when for some reason he has forgotten what answer he has given to the first question, "What ought I to do?" but when he remembers that he has given some answer. But he cannot, of course, sensibly ask the two questions *together* and give divergent answers to them. He cannot meaningfully say "the answer to 'What ought I to do?' is 'I ought to write a letter of apology,' but the answer to 'What do I think I ought to do?' is 'I ought not to write a letter of apology,' I wonder which of the two I ought to do?" But an agent would have to be able sensibly to say this, if Ross' question is to arise for him. I think the fact that these two questions may *both* arise for someone in some contexts, obscures the fact that they cannot arise together for an agent in the way Ross thinks they can.

There is still a further reason. The question "What do I think I ought to do?" is sometimes confused with another, "What ought I to think I ought to?" And this is merely another form of asking "What is the correct answer to 'What ought I to do?' " which is very much the same as "What ought I to do?" This is an important confusion because it is a confusion of psychology and epistemology. "What do I think I ought to do?" is a psychological question, a question about what answer I remember I have given to "What ought I to do?" "What ought I to think I ought to do?" is an epistemological question, a somewhat unnatural formulation of the question "What is the correct answer to the question 'What ought I to do?' " I think it is this confusion of psychology and epistemology which has led the followers of the so-called "Emotive Theory" to attach so much importance to the translation of moral terms into terms of approval. For such a translation seems to them to be the transformation of a hopeless epistemological question ("How do we validate statements containing moral terms?") into a difficult but familiar psychological one ("When do we say of someone that he approves of something?"). But this view is mistaken. For even if there were a feeling of approval, or if approval were a disposition of some sort, or if it were a performatory word, none of which I think it is, the question whether someone does, in fact, approve, is still quite a different sort of question from the one whether someone ought to approve; even though, as in the case of "I think I ought to do this,"

it does not make sense for anyone to say "I approve of this, but I ought not to."

To repeat: No moral agent can ask himself the question "Which act ought I to do, the subjectively right or the objectively right act?" for such a question does not present the agent with two genuinely alternative acts. This is obscured by the fact that there are other similar questions which may genuinely arise for an agent, with which Ross' question is confused.

2. I said that Ross' question could not arise for a moral agent. But it can very well arise for a moral onlooker, a moral critic, a moral judge. When considering someone else's action already done, such a person might well ask himself whether the agent ought to have done what was subjectively right or what was objectively right. He might ask "Which of the two acts ought Jones to have done, the one he thought right or the one which really was right?" The answer to this question is made more difficult by the fact that people asking it usually have confusedly in their mind both the following questions: "What was Jones' duty?" and "Was Jones doing his duty?"

When asking the question "What was Jones' duty?" we are normally asking a question about the content of Jones' duty. We may conveniently divide that content into the theoretical and the practical task. In any given situation, the moral agent's theoretical task consists in finding out, as far as he is not capable of doing from habit, under what obligations he is there and then. The moral agent's practical task is to act in accordance with these findings. Thus, when we ask "What was Jones' duty?" the answer may be of various forms. (*a*) It is to complete the theoretical and the practical task. (*b*) It is to return the children to his wife. (*c*) It is to keep the children. In the first case, we are indicating what is anyone's and, therefore, Jones' duty. In the second case we are indicating the correct solution of the problem set by the theoretical task. In the third case we are indicating the agent's own solution of that problem, i.e. his practical task.

This question must not be confused with another, "What is the definition (or analysis) of duty?" Such definitions or analyses are given in terms of (moral or non-moral) concepts other than duty. One of the reasons for the paradox arising is that Ross and Prichard have accepted a wrong definition of duty. Ross defines duty as "act which it is right to do." But this is obviously incorrect, for an act may be right without being a duty, e.g. disinheriting one's children, giving all one's property to the poor, or playing tennis on Sunday afternoon. "Right" is a blanket term, covering such diverse terms as "obligatory," "supererogatory," "permissible" and "indifferent." Any act which is one of these is right. But certainly acts which are supererogatory, permissible, or indifferent, are not acts which are

anyone's duty. Nor, to be exact, do we say of all acts which are obligatory on us that we have a duty to do them, or that it is our duty to do them, nor that they are our duties. Duties, in ordinary discourse (though not in moral philosophy), are only those acts which someone has an obligation to perform in virtue of the fact that he holds some (responsible) post or occupation, as in "The duties of a doctor," "The duties of an engine driver," or stands in some specified relation to someone else, as in "The duties of a father," "The duties of a teacher."[1] It is worth noting—what Ross and many other moralists do not seem to have noticed—that, accordingly, the solution of the theoretical task may reveal to some agent that he has no duties or even no obligations at all and that he can do what he likes—provided it would not be wrong for him to do it. (Clearly it would be quite unnatural to say that someone had an obligation or a duty not to murder anybody, yet equally clearly it would be wrong for him to do so.) I think Ross and many philosophers forget that, most of the time, we are free, i.e. our duties are done, our obligations fulfilled and we may do as we please.

3. I must now examine another similar question, "Was Jones doing his duty?" The paradox obviously arises as follows. If we admit that anyone including Jones himself can make a mistake about what is Jones' duty (i.e. that "duty" is objective) it is clear that the difficulty lies in the fact that someone may err in the course of solving his theoretical task and then act in accordance with the erroneous findings.

In the first place, we must distinguish between "Was Jones doing his duty?" and "Has Jones done his duty?" This latter question raises an additional issue, i.e. whether Jones has been trying to do his duty and whether he has succeeded or failed. If Jones' duty was to get £50,000 to settle a gambling debt by a certain date, then if he is trying very hard to raise the money, we may, looking back at any given point of time, say that, at that time, Jones was doing his duty. But if, one day after the deadline, Jones has not yet managed to get the money, we may say that, although at any time prior to the deadline, Jones was doing his duty, nevertheless, looking back at his whole activity, we must say that Jones has not done his duty, meaning thereby that, although he had tried to do his duty, he had failed.

Yet a different question is "Did Jones do his duty?" We ask it when we know what Jones' duty was and when we want to find out whether he has in fact taken the course of action prescribed by his duty. Suppose we know that it was Jones' duty to shut the factory gates. If we then ask "Did Jones do his duty?" we might just as well have asked "Did Jones shut the factory gates?"

[1] I owe this suggestion to Mr. D. Gunner, but he is not responsible for the use I have made of it.

Sometimes we ask the question "Was Jones doing his duty?" when we know what course of action Jones was taking, but do not know what his duty was. This is another way of asking "Was this Jones' duty?" We have already dealt with this question.

Summing up these cases we may say: we say that Jones was doing his duty in the cases where he had correctly solved the theoretical task and was tackling the practical task; that Jones was not doing his duty in the cases where he was not tackling the practical task. The difficulty arises where Jones, through no fault of his own, has incorrectly solved the theoretical task and is tackling the practical task. Should we say that he was doing his duty because he was tackling the practical task, or should we say that he was not doing his duty, because he was tackling a task which was not really his duty? Let us consider two cases.

Suppose Jones erroneously thinks it is his duty to shut the factory gate. On Ross' view, the subjectively right act for Jones is to shut the gate, the objectively right act, not to shut it. On the so-called subjective interpretation, Jones was doing his duty, if he shut the gate; on the objective interpretation, if he did not shut it. But if we keep in mind what was said under the definition of duty, it becomes clear that this case does not present a problem. Jones erroneously thought that he had a duty. It logically follows that he did not have that duty (though this is not the reason why he did not have that duty), hence he could not and did not do his duty. But of course, it is not the case that he failed to do it, either. For from the fact that he had *no* duty to shut the gate, it cannot follow that he had a duty not to shut the gate.

But there is a more serious case. Suppose Jones erroneously thought that it was his duty to shut the gate and that, in fact, it was his duty not to shut it. Suppose also that he did, in fact, shut the gate. If I want to tell someone what Jones was doing, I cannot say that Jones was doing his duty, because this implies that he was doing what was, in fact, his duty. But if we say that Jones was not doing his duty, this implies that Jones was not tackling his practical task, was not meaning to do his duty. And since, in such cases, either phrase will be misleading, I suggest that in such cases we use neither phrase. I suggest that we say instead "Jones was meaning to do his duty, but he got his duty wrong" or "Jones was meaning to do his duty, but he made a mistake about what it was." We have only to realize that it is merely on the Ross-Prichard interpretation of the situation that we *must* say either that Jones was doing his duty or that he was not doing his duty. For on their interpretation of the matter the agent must choose between doing either the subjectively right act or the objectively right act, and the onlooker (or judge, etc.) must choose between praising him, etc., for doing the subjectively or for doing the

objectively right act. But I have shown that the agent cannot so choose because there are no two actions between which he could choose, and the onlooker need not so choose either, but need merely allot the blame: if Jones has made an error, but not a culpable error, in arriving at the conclusion that it was his duty to shut the gate, then clearly he is not blameworthy for shutting the gate, even though what he did was in fact, but unknown to him, what he ought not to have done. But although he is not blameworthy for shutting the gate, he may yet be to blame, in the sense that he is responsible for the action (if no one else is to blame for Jones' error) and he may be liable for any damages arising out of his error.

The whole trouble arises because "Not doing one's duty" implies both that one is not doing what is, in fact, one's duty and also that one knows it and/or means not to do what is one's duty. We have not, as far as I am aware, a well-established phrase, distinguishing this case from the case where a man means to do his duty, but gets it wrong, as we have in the parallel case of "Obeying an order," "Not obeying an order," "Disobeying an order." There are, however, some incipient usages, distinguishing between these cases which might, I suggest, be adopted in philosophical writings. We distinguish between "Doing one's duty" (when we mean "Correctly completing both the theoretical and the practical tasks"), "Erring in one's duty" (when we mean "Doing what one erroneously thinks is one's duty"), and "Not doing one's duty" (when we mean "Not performing the practical task"). Among these last cases, we may distinguish "Violating one's duty" (when we mean "Not doing one's duty when one knows what is, in fact, one's duty and means not to do it") and "Failing to do one's duty" (when we mean "Not doing one's duty, when one has not even embarked on one's theoretical task and does not care whether one is or is not doing one's duty").

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DISCUSSION:

INDUCTION AND PROBABILITY

Mr. Harrod's paper in the issue of *Philosophy* dated January 1951 raises a number of questions which deserve to be taken up and discussed in some detail, although in this note I cannot do more than refer very briefly to a few of the more interesting matters. If I seem to have picked upon points of disagreement rather than agreement this is, of course, primarily because discussion usually leads further when it involves a clash of views. The presuppositions and modes of argument to which I raise objection are in no way peculiar to Mr. Harrod's paper, and it is just because they are prevalent in philosophical discussions that I am anxious to join issue with Mr. Harrod in the present note.

1. The "basic problem of induction" is a philosopher's fiction. Knowledge is actually acquired not so much by simple association of ideas as by extension of an existing body of knowledge. This knowledge, which results partly from observation and partly from intellectual construction, and which is far from homogeneous with respect to the degree of certainty attributed to its different parts, is held together by a conceptual skeleton; and the growth of the skeleton is more fundamental to induction than the accretion of new facts. The "classical" attitude towards induction, which is the one adopted by Mr. Harrod, amounts to looking at it from outside, and anyone who takes up this attitude is thereby precluded from detecting the rational process that is actually going on.

It would not matter that induction as commonly described by philosophers is an artificial model if it reproduced enough of the essential characteristics of its original. Formal logic, for instance, is equally a model; but since it gives a faithful representation of the formal structure of deductive systems it is of very considerable value. But the conventional model of inductive thinking is by comparison a travesty of that activity, and to study it closely can be of only limited utility.

2. It is a mistake, though a very common one, to suppose that the criteria by which a concrete activity is to be judged are necessarily to be sought in a more abstract activity. Up to a point it is no doubt so; thus conduct is judged according to ethical principles, and accuracy in computation by comparison with general arithmetical rules or theorems. But there comes a stage where such judgment is no longer possible; and this stage is reached in philosophy. To appeal, as Mr. Harrod does by implication on page 37, to "the final arbitrament of logic" is dangerous for this reason. For what is logic? In one sense of the term it is the formal structure of correct reasoning, isolated and presented as a mathematical formalism; and logic in this sense can clearly be no final arbiter, since the question as to whether the accepted logical formalism is in fact a true representation of correct inference cannot be decided within the formalism. The real arbiter is not logic in this narrow sense but reason itself, i.e. the activity, concrete and yet normative, which is exercised in all thinking. But if this is the case we cannot simply dismiss as mere pragmatical justification the appeal to what scientists actually do or have done. This particular experience is certainly relevant to the problem of justifying inductive procedures, although it is far from being the whole story.

3. Mr. Harrod is guilty more than once of an error which, following Dr. Thouless, we may describe as appeal to fantastic anecdote. This error consists

in giving a circumstantial description of a situation or an episode which is either wholly fictitious or else so highly idealized that it bears little relation to actuality, and then basing an argument on this alleged evidence. The illustration of the sentient being moving along a path (page 38) is a case in point, and that of the primitive man musing upon the possible end of the world (page 43) is another; and so too is the instance of the philosopher who provisionally admits the possibility that the universe may be Heracleitan (page 49). In actual reasoning, as already stated in 1, we never acquire knowledge by the simple method of agreement, starting out with an absolutely blank sheet. Mr. Harrod, of course, does not seriously suppose that we do, and neither does any other philosopher; but this makes it all the more odd that so much reliance should be placed by philosophers on arguments of this kind from fantastic anecdotes.

4. Mr. Harrod's account of the reasons why simple laws of nature are preferred to complex ones is interesting, and there is much truth in what he says in this connection. With his general conclusions in the second part of his paper I am in substantial agreement, and it seems to me that the type of argument by inverse probability that he uses is worth closer study. It is, in fact, an instance of a very general mode of argument which rests on a principle that remarkable coincidences can be discounted. The principle is constantly invoked in statistics, where it is used subject to careful scientific control; and in a more intuitive though no less powerful application it underlies "proof" from circumstantial evidence, both in legal argument and in historical research. Whether it can be justified, except in relatively few cases, by appealing to formal considerations of probability is extremely doubtful (cf. 2 above) and systematic study of arguments which make use of the principle is an important task for philosophers. In formal logic every such argument involves a *non sequitur*, and yet there is perhaps no other mode of demonstration upon which we rely so heavily in actual reasoning about the real world.

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PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA

NOTE ON VISIT TO INDIAN JUBILEE PHILOSOPHICAL CONGRESS

During the course of last winter I attended the Indian Jubilee Philosophical Congress in Calcutta as their guest and the representative of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, and also lectured at the Indian universities of Calcutta, Patna, Benares, Allahabad, Agra, Lucknow, Aligarh, Delhi, Bombay, Baroda, Poona and Mysore. I spoke alike before Hindu, Jain and Muslim institutions. I thus obtained a varied and extensive, if somewhat hasty and superficial, experience of the country, and readers of this periodical might be interested to know a little of my impressions of present-day Indian philosophy. In general, two things struck me particularly forcibly. The first was the widespread and keen interest in the subject. At most universities both the number of students making a specialized study of philosophy and the number of teachers were greater than, I think, at any British university, except Oxford. At the Congress itself, the audience was estimated as high as 700. The idea that the philosophers might have something to say which would help the world to emerge from the present deplorable state of international affairs is more widespread than in this country, and Indian philosophy is traditionally more connected than English with the search for the good life in a religious sense, but at the universities the main motive struck me as being simply genuine intellectual interest in the subject. I was not, however, in a position to form any idea of the quality of the students since, as is apt to be the case, the great majority of those who spoke in any discussions after my lectures were university teachers, not students.

Secondly, Indian philosophy is surprisingly little affected by the tide of positivism which has submerged so much in the west. India remains a great (perhaps at the moment the only) stronghold of metaphysical idealism, based on epistemology, mystical experience, and the idea that a study of the nature of the self discloses that it is identical with the supreme principle of reality. The kind of idealism prevalent is absolutistic or at least theistic, and though there are of course a number of exceptions it is probable that at most Indian universities the philosophical atmosphere is rather like that of Oxford in the 'nineties. Most students are still brought up on Bradley to a large extent. It is a commonplace that the Indians are a very religious people, and the connection between philosophy and religion fostered by Hinduism and the fact that Indian philosophers are on the whole much more interested in the problems raised by the philosophy of religion than in those raised by the philosophy of science help to account for their immunity to naturalism and positivism. The religious temperament of most Indians probably also accounts for the fact that Communism, in spite of the great and widespread poverty, is still very weak in India. We may also note that the sting of a good many anti-metaphysical arguments would be removed by the old Indian philosophical tradition according to which we are debarred from ascribing positive attributes to ultimate reality, except in a very qualified sense. One must not, however, ascribe present-day Indian idealism simply to the old Indian philosophy. Till a few years ago at any rate, Western philosophy formed a very much larger part of the curriculum than did the philosophy native to the country, and this tradition still persists to a considerable extent.

I have spoken rather of my general impressions of Indian philosophy than specifically of the Congress, though of course the latter was an important

contributory influence to forming those impressions. The most striking figure there was undoubtedly the president, Professor Radhakrishnan, whose eloquence gave a moving general picture of the function of philosophy at its best. With their traditional hospitality the Indians assigned too large a place in the programme to us, foreign delegates, and I am not qualified to pass a judgment on those discussions which dealt with great Indian philosophers of the past, of whom Aurobindo occupied much the most prominent place. A symposium representing the points of view of the different leading religions of the world was very interesting and was remarkable for the absence of any breath of intolerance. The general impression was that there is plenty of promise in Indian philosophy, and that great results might be produced by a synthesis of the analytic method of the west with the metaphysical insight of the east (and of the west too—in its almost forgotten but revivable past).

A. C. Ewing.

NEW BOOKS

Socratic Method and Critical Philosophy. Selected Essays by LEONARD NELSON. Translated by Thomas K. Brown III. Foreword by Brand Blanshard. Introduction by Julius Kraft. Yale University Press (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1950. Pp. xxii + 211. Price 30s.)

What is offered here is in effect samples from the work of one who compressed into a life no longer than from 1882 to 1927 what seems to have been a remarkable amount of activity as a teacher and as promoter of higher studies in the philosophy of politics. Among his writings are stated to be "a fully documented and penetratingly executed reinterpretation of the history of metaphysics since Hume," and "the imposing task of erecting a complete system of ethics together with its epistemological foundation," as well as work in other branches of philosophy. What expectations are we justified in entertaining? To use the standard by which Nelson himself justifies disregard of "the dark centuries of the Middle Ages," does his work represent intellectual progress?

The present collection contains essays on metaphysics and theory of knowledge, ethics, aesthetics and the method of teaching philosophy. In the last sphere, Nelson proclaims his allegiance in the first place to the Socratic dialectic; but his reason for holding this to be the necessary method in the teaching of philosophy lies in his belief in the essentially critical nature of philosophy as a science. In this view of the nature of philosophy he is avowedly following Kant, and it is to Kant that, clearly, he owes the main outlines of his thought. Indeed it may be said that, apart from some small and hardly fortunate departures inspired by J. F. Fries, Nelson's thought is Kantian through and through.

In the theory of knowledge, he works with the Kantian distinctions of intuition, concept and idea; there are things-in-themselves which, because they exist independent of the way in which we have knowledge of them, can never become the objects of scientific knowledge. Science deduces syllogistically explanations of events from laws of their necessary connection inductively discovered. From the inductive process of science must be distinguished the equally regressive process of criticism or abstraction characteristic of philosophy. By this process we do not indeed *prove* the principles on which our knowledge rests—such a claim would be self-contradictory; but we become aware that certain principles, constituting a non-intuitive immediate rational knowledge (of which, however, we have no immediate *consciousness*), are the principles of our knowledge. The knowledge that there are these principles and that they are the "preassumptions" of our scientific thinking is attained through the study of Reason, a branch of empirical psychology.

In aesthetics and ethics Nelson's thought moves on similarly Kantian lines. The leading concepts of ethics are duty and freedom, concepts which lead to a rejection of mysticism and superstition in religion. A reconciliation between religion and ethics must be based on the acceptance by religion of the impossibility of making its god in any way comprehensible. The aesthetic judgment is apodictic and universal, but based not on concepts but on ideas, in the technical sense of "notions the object of which cannot be found in any specific cognition" (p. 52). It is puzzling to find that, of the two sorts of idea (logical, related to the possibility of scientific law, and aesthetic, related to the individuality which is given in intuition), it is the former and not the latter which

underlie the aesthetic conception (p. 55). (Can something have escaped the care of translator and editor here?) Ideas are applied to the phenomena of art through feeling, not as in science through syllogism.

Perhaps it is because some of them are concerned with the presentation of philosophy to a more or less lay public that these essays contain a rather large proportion of apparently dogmatic statements about the nature and potentialities of philosophy and a rather tenuous exemplification of Nelson's actual philosophical thinking. Nevertheless, he shows himself as a man who had throughly made his own the conceptions he chose to employ. He does not, to my mind, give evidence of creative faculty. Those who felt the influence of a stimulating and even inspiring teacher may be reluctant to allow this influence to lapse; and there may be others who would derive illumination from Nelson's capacity to exhibit briefly the main characteristics of the Kantian conceptual scheme. But while there will always be room for objective reconsideration of Kant's philosophy in the light of changing ideas it is surely too late for a philosophy which works unquestioningly with Kantian categories. It is, of course, possible that intellectual progress is more convincingly exhibited in the major works on metaphysics and ethics which are promised us; but the present sample gives no reason to expect this.

The translation, apart from occasional lapses, makes a generally intelligible presentation of what must at times have been an indigestible original. There is a full index, and fly-leaves are copious. I have seen very few misprints. The Foreword and the Introduction contribute useful background, but do not compel us to share their authors' estimate of Nelson's work.

D. R. Cousin.

M. M. Sharif. *Beauty: Objective or Subjective?* (Pp. 87. 4s.). *Beauty and Expression* (Pp. 118 +. 7s. 6d.). *The Nature of Tragedy* (Pp. 105. 5s.). (Ashraf Publications Co., Lahore.)

These three pamphlets are all developed from lectures or papers read to various societies.

The first maintains that beauty, though not a quality of things, is not subjective in the sense of a quality of mental states or acts. But the latter, so far as I know, has never been asserted. Unexpectedness may well be called subjective, but not therefore a quality of the surprised state. The view is that the aesthetic experience is stimulated by objects with certain admitted qualities, notably "organic unity." But has a sunset this?

The second gives, in the main, an accurate, though necessarily dry, summary of Croce's *Estetica*; but it is difficult to verify the translated quotations, since there is no indication to which edition they refer—certainly not mine. This may have been given in the introduction, described by the publishers as "valuable"; but unfortunately in the copy sent for review all but the last dozen lines is missing, as are the corresponding pages at the end of the book. The publishers, however, also describe the work as "the most exhaustive treatment so far received by the subject," a phrase I should reserve for Collingwood's *Principles of Art*.

I agree with most of Professor Sharif's criticisms of Croce, but I think he fails to appreciate fairly the distinction of expression from symptom or the place allowed to externalization. He appears to share Croce's idealism without considering Gentile's claim of pressing it to its logical conclusion. A long excursus on the nature of comedy is less interesting.

The third book is a useful introduction to criticism of Aristotle's *Poetics* in the light of the modern use of the word "tragic," of modern poetical practice

and of modern psychology; but the author is the victim of some modern catch-words, such as "dynamic equilibrium," which mean little to an ordinary reader.

All three books are very imperfectly indexed. E. F. CARRITT.

The Essentials of Indian Philosophy. By M. HIRIYANNA. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1949. Pp. 216. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

This book contains eight chapters, ten pages of notes and references, a Sanskrit glossary and an index. Chapter I deals with Vedic Religion and Philosophy, Chapter II is entitled "Transition to the Systems" (i.e. the six "orthodox" systems based on the Vedas and three further ones, Buddhism, Jainism, and materialism); Chapter III deals in greater detail with Buddhism and Jainism, and Chapters IV to VIII with the "orthodox" systems.

The author draws attention to a characteristic feature of Indian culture, viz. that when a new stage of progress is reached the old is not discarded, but is, sooner or later, incorporated in it. We may see this, for instance, in the many survivals of Hinduism which are to be detected in Buddhism; in the fact that the worship of Śrī Krishna, the founder of the Bhāgavata creed, was assimilated to Vaishnavism; and that still later a place was actually found for Buddha among the ten principal incarnations of Vishnu.

A great mass of philosophical material had accumulated by the third or fourth century B.C. In the succeeding centuries the material was systematized by various schools, the most important of which were those treated by our author. It is noteworthy that, no matter which system is followed, the aim of its study is "not merely to gratify theoretical curiosity," but to live the right kind of life, leading to the universal Indian ideal of *mokṣa* or release (commonly equated with Nirvāṇa). Specifically Indian doctrines which are admitted by all the systems (save only the out-and-out materialists) are the law of Karma or moral retribution, and its necessary corollary, Saṃsāra (metempsychosis). The consequence of what a man does will seek him out later "as surely as a calf does its mother in a herd of cows." The ideal of *mokṣa*, release from deeds and their consequences and hence from the cycle of rebirths, may be attained either through the path of action (*karma* used in a somewhat different sense), or that of knowledge (*jñāna*), or that of devotion (*bhakti*), as the Bhāgavadgītā teaches. It may be questioned whether Mr. Hiriyanna is right in saying (p. 61) that Hindus generally believe that it is God who allots rewards and punishments to all beings according to their *karma*: the ancient belief certainly was that even the gods were subject to the inexorable law of Karma.

Of the schools based on the Veda, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system, which is mainly concerned with logic and dialectics, may be described as realistic. It has an interesting atomic theory, and regards the physical universe as ultimately consisting of an indefinite number of atoms of four types, plus three infinite and pervasive entities—ether (*ākāśa*, regarded as the substratum of sound), time, and space. This system regards the whole and its parts as quite distinct and postulates a special relation (*samavāya*, "inherence") between them, which is described by Mr. Hiriyanna as "a metaphysical fiction." The same relationship is supposed to obtain between a universal and the particulars which it characterizes. Universals in this doctrine are regarded as eternal and independently real, not as transient configurations of particular objects (Jain view) or as purely conceptual (Buddhist view).

The Sānkhya and Yoga schools form another composite system, which regards both matter and spirit as ultimately real and admits a plurality of selves. It differs from the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in tracing the whole of the physical universe to a single source called Prakṛti. Puruṣa and Prakṛti, or spirit and nature, are the two basic conceptions of the doctrine (p. 107). Spirit without nature (or "matter") is inoperative and nature without spirit is blind. The knowledge of the ultimate separateness of these two principles is stated to be the means to release.

The philosophical system most closely associated with the earlier portions of the Veda is known as Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, as opposed to the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā, more familiarly known as Vedānta, which takes its authority from the Upanishads. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā remained essentially a system of ritual exposition, while the Vedānta, as Mr. Hiriyanna says (p. 151), "combines in one harmonious whole the results attained by all previous orthodox thinkers, and is therefore looked upon as the most perfect expression of Indian thought." The schools of Vedānta may be classed as either absolutistic or theistic—the former representing Brahman, the ultimate reality, as an impersonal principle and the latter as a personal God. Three schools are treated by our author, all of which are living creeds to-day: Advaita (non-dualistic), Viśiṣṭādvaita ("limitedly non-dualistic") and Dvaita (dualistic).

It is easy to see where the author's sympathies lie: with Śankara (A.D. 788–820), the renowned exponent of the Advaita Vedānta. The Advaitic world-view is that Brahman is the sole reality, appearing both as the objective universe and as the individual subject. The universe is an illusory manifestation of Brahman, while the individual is Brahman itself appearing under the limitations which form part of that illusory universe. Man's ultimate aim, leading to release, should be to know this truth and to realize his identity with Brahman.

Mr. Hiriyanna's account of Buddhism is based chiefly on the later writings of Mrs. Rhys Davids. The statement (p. 77) that the well-known "eightfold path" includes *sīla* and *prajñā* is somewhat inaccurate: these qualities are in fact represented by *vāyāma* (right effort) and *sati* (right mindfulness). It is not necessary to make a mystery of the meaning of the terms "Hīnayāna" and "Mahāyāna": yāna clearly means "vehicle," not "path," as Mr. Hiriyanna suggests.

The birthdate of the Buddha, which Mr. Hiriyanna takes as 563 B.C., is by no means firmly established. Further, the expression on page 72, "it is commonly believed" that Buddhism began to spread both in India and beyond owing to the impetus of the Emperor Asoka, implies a doubt which is not justified. It is rightly pointed out that primitive Buddhism represents a new expansion, not against, but within Brahmanism: the author is also right in stressing that Nirvana signifies not the annihilation of the self, but only the extinguishing of selfhood in the ordinary acceptation of the term (p. 73): but unfortunately he contradicts himself ten pages later, when he says that the goal of life in Hīnayāna Buddhism is generally annihilation.

This confusion seems to persist in the author's treatment of other systems: for instance, what does he mean by saying (p. 103) that the commonly accepted goal of *moksa*, which he describes a few sentences before as "a state beyond pain and pleasure," is a "condition of perfect gloom from which there will be no reawakening"?

A common feature of all the systems is that they involve an investigation of *pramāṇas*, i.e. "the proximate means to valid knowledge." The Indian syllogism is inductive as well as deductive, and Mr. Hiriyanna says (p. 42): "They (i.e. pramāṇas) are usually regarded as a help not only in acquiring

new knowledge, but also in verifying what is already known, so that logic, as conceived in India, is a science both of proof and of discovery."

In addition to the means of establishing evidence which are familiar to us in the West, viz. perception and inference, most of the Indian schools admit some or all of the following: *śruti* (revelation, lit. "hearing": specifically, scriptural knowledge as revealed to the ancient sages); *upamāna* (analogy); *arthāpatti* (presumption, or disjunctive reasoning) and *anupalabdhi* (non-perception). Even this list is not exhaustive! We cannot enter here into a detailed discussion of the pramāṇas, but it may be remarked that Mr. Hiriyanna's treatment of them is disappointing because disjointed. The book would have been much clearer if all the pramāṇas had been discussed together in the first instance and then merely referred to when dealing with the separate systems.

Mr. Hiriyanna states (p. 141) that, although *upamāna* (analogy) is not syllogistic inference, it reduces itself to what in modern logic is described as "immediate inference from reciprocal relations." We may comment that, although it may certainly be argued from one point of view that *upamāna* can be included under perception, or inference, or credible testimony (*śruti* or *āptavacana*), as the case may be, yet on the other hand this pramāṇa may be said to have a definite value of its own in the growth of knowledge. Its chief use is in the elucidation of abstract ideas: in establishing specific resemblances between different objects. The structure of the Indian syllogism, which is in essence inference from examples, shows how important was the concrete illustration. Not only positive, but also negative examples were adduced to clarify the nature of the probandum; and it was an established rule that an example must be an object or circumstance regarding which there was a concurrence of opinion among both laymen and philosophers.

Mr. Hiriyanna appears to confuse "non-perception" with "non-existence" in his discussion of the pramāṇa of *anupalabdhi* (pp. 95 *et seq.*). He also seems to give a wrong interpretation to *atyanta-abhāva*, which he calls "the denial of a thing somewhere with the suggestion that it is somewhere else": whereas the term should be interpreted as "absolute non-existence" (e.g. of an imaginary object such as a unicorn, a chimera). These slips of his are the more surprising because he shows, on the whole, a sound grasp of the essence of philosophical problems and a nice balance in relating the Indian to the Western treatment of them.

This book should stimulate interest in the study of Indian philosophy. It is clear and readable and any adverse criticisms are not intended to detract from its general merit. The reader may occasionally be irritated by too-frequent references to what has gone before or what is to follow, e.g. "to which we shall refer at some length in the next chapter," or "it will suffice here to refer to only such important points . . . as have not already been mentioned"; and it is certainly annoying to have the "footnotes" at the back and with no page references. The notes lose much of their value by not containing page numbers for reference, being based on chapter-headings only. The glossary does contain page references, but it would have been a convenience for the lay European reader if our alphabetical order had been adopted instead of the Sanskrit order. Finally, a dozen misprints in Sanskrit words were noted in the course of one reading of the book.

DOROTHY STEDE.

Logic and the Basis of Ethics. By ARTHUR N. PRIOR. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1949. Price 8s. 6d.)

Mr. Prior has written, with lucid economy, the history of an inconsistency in theorizing about ethics. I think, indeed, he regards himself, though he does not describe himself, as having written the histories of two distinct inconsistencies. The first inconsistency might be described as the attempt to combine naturalism with non-naturalism; or as the attempt both to assert and deny the autonomy of ethics; or as the attempt to represent ethical propositions as both distinct from, and identical with, some propositions of theology or sociology or natural science. The second inconsistency might be described as the attempt both to assert and to deny that ethical utterances express propositions; or as the attempt both to assert and deny that there are ethical facts corresponding to (some) ethical utterances in the way there are (it is said) theological, sociological and physical facts corresponding to the utterances of those who report on the habits of matter, men and gods.

Mr. Prior begins by pointing out that Moore's famous argument is a refutation only of the naturalist who contends (1) that "good" means X and (2) that "X is good" is not tautological. He points out, further, that it is not even a refutation of the naturalist who upholds both (1) and (2), provided this naturalist also contends (3) that "good" means, ambiguously, a number of things of which X is one and, say, Y another; for then this naturalist can consistently assert (2) by interpreting "X is good" as, say, the synthetic proposition that X is Y. The logical sin against which Moore's argument is really effective is the *inconsistency* of offering any definition of "good" in terms which would not ordinarily be regarded as specifically ethical, while at the same time treating an utterance to the effect that something is good as being an utterance different in kind from the assertion that the thing has the characteristic (or one of the characteristics) said to be meant by "good." This is what naturalists are prone to do. And naturally. For ethical utterances *are* (of course) different in kind from assertions describing conduct and character in terms we should not ordinarily regard as ethical.

Mr. Prior then broadens his thesis, pointing to what he regards as a more general error than that one of its special cases which Moore exposed: the mistake, namely, of supposing *both* that ethical assertions form a distinct class *and* that such assertions can be *deduced*, without the help of ethical principles, from premisses not themselves ethical. (The reason why Moore is held to have criticized a special case of this error is that the definitions of the inconsistent naturalist form one class of such premisses.) This is the Mistake to which the title of Prichard's famous essay refers: the mistake of thinking the task of meta-ethics to be the provision of non-ethical *foundations* for ethical judgments and principles; of attempting to derive an "ought" from an "is" without invoking an "ought," while insisting that an "ought" is radically different from an "is."

In one or another of its forms, Locke committed, and Moore exposed, the error; though Locke was by no means the last to commit it, nor Moore the first to expose it. And this Mr. Prior deftly shows, with a great number of interesting examples, in the first half of his book.

The way in which Prichard, Moore, Carritt, Ross and Ewing have recommended us to avoid this error is the way of non-natural, intuitable qualities and relations; the way of autonomous moral facts, with their attendant dubious methods of discovery. Mr. Prior does not expressly commit himself to a view of this kind, though his language suggests that he sympathizes with it. He is aware, of course, of the existence of an alternative class of answers (though not, perhaps, of its full extension), founded on the recognition that we do not use

indicative forms of expression solely to report or to forecast in a particular or a general way. To this class of answers belong not only the first, clumsy assimilations of ethical utterance to orders, exclamations or the venting of feelings; but also the more refined descriptions in terms of expression of an "attitude" of approval or disapproval (Stevenson); or in terms of "commending" (Mr. Hare and the O.E.D.), grading (Mr. Urmson) or condemning—activities which involve reference to "standards." Mr. Prior does not directly criticize views of this type. His point is, rather, that those who hold them are guilty of an inconsistency comparable with that previously discussed, if they at the same time claim for ethical utterances the status of true or false propositions. Convincing examples of this second inconsistency seem more difficult to find. Professor Findlay is accused of it, however; and Adam Smith and Dr. Popper are found to approach it in their suggested analogies between the truth of propositions and the propriety or validity of ethical judgments. Mr. Prior argues these points with subtlety and determination, though not, I think, with entire success.

What is more importantly questionable than Mr. Prior's success in these detailed criticisms is his apparent assumption that no ethical philosopher except Professor Ayer would be willing to sacrifice the "propositional" status of ethical utterances; and that, hence, an inconsistency of the second kind awaits any other theorist of this general class as surely as an inconsistency of the first kind awaits any but the brazen naturalist. But this seems to me false in fact. It is quite common nowadays to take the line that evaluation (grading, recommending, condemning) is quite a distinct activity from stating; while at the same time pointing out that such an evaluation carries with it, for those who know the evaluator's standards, descriptive implications (it may be, only vague ones) concerning what is evaluated. In this there is no inconsistency. Nor is it difficult to see how, on such a theory, evaluation-standards can themselves be evaluated. A remaining problem for such a view will be the provision of criteria for distinguishing moral or ethical evaluation from other kinds.

This type of answer seems to me correct as far as it goes. But I am not satisfied that it is final or sufficient. And this dissatisfaction is connected with the feeling that Mr. Prior's account of the fallacy of inconsistent naturalism, although also correct as far as it goes, is not a final or sufficient account. It does not explain sufficiently the persistence of what Mr. Prior regards as undiluted error. Mr. Prior leaves us with the impression that, because it is inconsistent to treat ethical pronouncements as both distinct from and identical with descriptive statements, there can *therefore* be no *logical* links between them at all. Those other contemporary philosophers who distinguish ethical pronouncements, as a sub-class of evaluations, from statements, leave us similarly with the impression that there is no *logical* absurdity in applying ethical predicates to any type of conduct or character whatever. But I am not sure that we should be happy to describe a man who advocates, say, systematic egoism, as a principle applicable to himself and to others alike, as merely advocating a moral code distinct from, and condemned by, our own. We might choose rather to describe him as an *amoralist*. The limits within which advocacy is to count as *moral* advocacy are certainly wide enough to allow of genuinely moral differences (differences of standard); but they do not seem to me *indefinitely* wide. There are expressions, perhaps only a very few (perhaps "cruelty" and "cruel," "selfish," "altruistic"), of which it seems true to say *both* (*a*) that a moral evaluation is a part of their logic (i.e. that it is quasi-analytic to say that a selfish or cruel man is to that extent a bad man); *and* (*b*) that some factual description of some type of conduct could be given such that to apply one of these expressions to conduct so described (e.g. to say that

it was cruel, or altruistic) would be to make an analytic statement. And this entailment, or quasi-entailment, is transitive. Roughly, I am suggesting that to express *moral* approbation of certain types of behaviour is logically impossible; for it would not be counted as *moral* approbation. This view has the merit of making the concept of, say, the Satanist intelligible. It gives the full point and irony to the paradoxical "Evil, be thou my good"; which announces, not the adoption of an unconventional moral code, but the systematic and explicit repudiation of morality.

Mr. Prior's book contains ample and excellently presented historical illustrations of the points I have discussed; and interesting discussions of further, connected questions, such as the force of the words "I promise," and the Kantian distinction between categorical and hypothetical imperatives.

P. F. Strawson.

Conditions of Freedom. By Professor John Macmurray. (Faber and Faber. Pp. 106. Crown 8vo. Price 6s.)

This book consists of three lectures which Professor Macmurray delivered at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, in January 1949. The first, on "The Relativity of Freedom," is an attempt to discern "the general principles which govern the achievement and the increase of human freedom at all times and in all circumstances" (pp. 29–30). The second, on "Contemporary Conflicts," deals with "the conditions to which freedom is relative in our time" (p. 48). The third, on "Freedom in Fellowship" (which has been considerably enlarged), points, after a long discussion, the moral that "The necessity of our time is the achievement of an effective world order" (p. 99). But he stresses "that there is not one form of human unity but two . . . the possibilities of a world unity are not limited to the construction of a world State on the model of the nation States of to-day," and looks to a world fellowship on the lines of the British Commonwealth rather than to the nightmare "dream of a super-State governing the whole world" (p. 105).

Throughout this book Professor Macmurray employs the unfortunate idiom which disguises *oughts* as *ares*: thus on page 33, "The purpose of the State is the elimination of the use of force in human intercourse"; and on the same page, "The intention of politics is not the use of force, but the elimination of force and the achievement of freedom through justice". But in each case he is surely concerned to urge that men *ought* to use political machinery for certain purposes (as indeed they ought) rather than to state (what would be obviously untrue) that in fact they always do do so. This way of writing, and the parallel one (a part of the so-called "material mode of speech") in which definitions of terms masquerade as facts about things, combine elsewhere, I think, to mislead Professor Macmurray into arresting pieces of apparently *a priori* psychology. "Since we can only be ourselves in fellowship, in a mutual caring for one another, it follows that the intention to enter into fellowship is implicit in every human being and in every human activity. . . . This means, in the concrete, that the natural tendency of any human beings who meet one another is to enter into fellowship, irrespective of all differences, whether of age, sex, race, nationality, social condition, natural ability, or any other, simply as human beings. If, in fact, they do not, it must be because the natural tendency is inhibited by fear" (p. 84).

A second criticism connected, though indirectly, with the first is that Professor Macmurray seldom brings forward particular and concrete examples to illustrate his general and abstract theses. This helps to make the book

obscure; and sometimes allows Professor Macmurray to say things which perhaps he would not want to maintain without qualification if he were to be challenged with instances. He writes, in a political context, "For it is no limitation upon a man's freedom that he has not the power to do something that he has no desire to do" (p. 21). Suppose then that most Soviet citizens do not even desire to abstain from Stalinolatry or to support opposition candidates. Surely this would be no reason for saying that their freedom in these respects was not limited? Perhaps I have misunderstood Professor Macmurray. And yet, if so, the main criticism still remains. Illustrations would have made it harder to misunderstand. ANTONY FLEW.

The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer. Edited by PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP. Volume VI in "The Library of Living Philosophers." (The Library of Living Philosophers, Inc., Evanston. 1949. Pp. xviii + 936. Price $6.)

It is a great pity that the works of Ernst Cassirer should be so little known in England, but it is doubtful whether this state of affairs will be much changed by the appearance of the present volume of essays, which may even confirm the impression that he is not (to borrow a phrase) a "philosopher's philosopher" but rather a man of great learning dealing with fields so vast that the logical apparatus of many contemporary philosophers is unable to bring them into focus. There is much in this book to give a different impression, but it is possible that some will return it to the bookshop shelves after a mere glance at titles such as "Cassirer on Mythological Thinking," "Ernst Cassirer's Philosophy of Culture," and "Cassirer's Placement of Art," and that these will be just the people who find least to satisfy them in the *Essay on Man*, the only one of Cassirer's works which has been on sale in English in this country during the past few years. There is therefore a special reason for recommending Cassirer to those who start with a distaste for broad views, and who are apt to consider the history of philosophy as a subject separate from and inferior to the study of philosophical problems, for they may easily conclude from appearances that Cassirer has nothing to teach them that they would wish to learn.

If asked to classify, e.g., *Substance and Function*, one would have to say that although in this work Cassirer gives a great deal of information about historical systems of philosophy, and about the development of science and mathematics, he is not primarily concerned with the history of any of these subjects. Cassirer uses his gift for analysis of other men's thought to show how a particular problem appears in different systems, advancing to his own conclusions by tracing the changes which brought a solution within reach. It is possible to collect opinions and even to trace influences in philosophy without doing the really difficult work of the trade, but no one could say this of Cassirer who continually shows one the peculiar "twist" of philosophical thought, and like other good philosophers teaches more by his characteristic moves than by his doctrines.

Since the relation between historical material and philosophical argument in Cassirer's work is not always easy to understand, it seems unfortunate that in one of the most interesting essays in this volume—Mr. Harold Smart's discussion of Cassirer's theory of mathematical concepts—this issue should be confused. When Mr. Smart says that Cassirer "brings to bear a devastating criticism, supported by profuse historical evidence" against empiricism, intuitionism, and the subject-predicate logic, he must mean that Cassirer supports his own theory of the logical foundations of mathematics by

criticizing his opponents and those whom he holds responsible for their errors. But when Mr. Smart speaks of two different kinds of evidence—historical and epistemological—for the contention that ordinal number is logically prior to cardinal number one wonders what he can mean, and one's doubt is increased by finding that he regards the remark "testimony . . . is well-nigh universal to the effect that 'in the beginning' was simple counting, a process resting directly on the concept of cardinal number" as a relevant criticism of this doctrine. In fact the theory of the formation of mathematical concepts in *Substance and Function* is concerned only with logical foundations, and Cassirer has a good reason for leaving out of account data on temporal priority. In the *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* we do find historical material, e.g. the discussion of the development of number systems of primitive peoples, but it is being used for exposition—in this case to show the concept of mathematical order in its crudest and most elementary form —rather as philosophers of a quite different temper might use hypothetical examples. One's impression that Mr. Smart has introduced a confusion not found in Cassirer himself is confirmed by the fact that in attacking the view that mathematical inference is purely deductive, Mr. Smart says that Cassirer lets the historical record testify against him by showing how arithmetic and geometry "developed from humble beginnings in common sense experience" and how "numerical and spatial concepts were for long encumbered with all sorts of sensuous connotations." Would not Cassirer be right in regarding such "testimony" as irrelevant to such a question? It would be ridiculous to give the impression that he is not interested in historical questions, but misleading to suggest that he uses historical evidence to support philosophical conclusions.

It is difficult to make any general statement about the quality of a volume such as this, and perhaps more useful simply to record the following fact: reading these essays I found that I could no longer recall the peculiar excellence of Cassirer's work, which immediately impressed me again when I returned to the original. Of course, this book was thrown off its balance by Cassirer's death which made it impossible to include his replies to his critics, so that to raise the question of whether translations and reprints would not have been more valuable is to be unfair to the original intention. But thinking of the dearth of good material on Kant's theory of mathematics one particularly regrets the fact that there is no translation of Cassirer's article "Kant und die moderne Mathematik" from *Kantstudien XII*. Cassirer was an admirable Kantian critic (particularly on account of his knowledge of modern mathematics and science) and he had so absorbed Kant's thought that many parts of his own work which are not about Kant help one to understand that philosopher. For this reason a reprint of *Substance and Function* would also be valuable both to students of Kant and to those who would see Cassirer's work at its best.

PHILIPPA FOOT.

Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, Vol. XLIX, Part 178, July 1950.

This number of the *Proceedings of the S.P.R.* contains two articles of considerable philosophical interest, "The Experimental Evidence for PK and Precognition," by C. W. K. Mundle, and "Immanuel Kant and Psychical Research" by Professor C. D. Broad.

Mr. Mundle points out the difficulties in distinguishing experimentally between precognition and PK (psycho-kinesis) and makes some ingenious suggestions for overcoming the difficulties. These seem to be sound and may

be recommended to the experimentalists. Philosophers will be interested in Mr. Mundle's *definitions* of PK and precognition, which are in terms of causation and "epistemological correspondence." He points out that if we adopt these definitions, we can interpret PK and precognition as independent hypotheses only by recognizing some criterion of causal connection other than the common sense one that the cause always precedes the effect. Consideration of Whately Carington's experiments suggests to him that one such criterion may be the *temporal* clustering of events round a centre, the centre being the cause. There is no space in a short review for the discussion of this idea in detail. Mr. Mundle's article seems to be an admirable example of the use which philosophers can make of the activities of psychical researchers by analysing the concepts involved.

In the first part of his article, Professor Broad gives the history of Kant's interest in Swedenborg. He plausibly attributes the change of tone between the letter to Miss von Knobloch and *Die Traüme eines Geistersehers* to Kant's reading of Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*. Before reading this book, Kant thought that Swedenborg might be a uniquely gifted individual; after reading it he regarded him as a boring charlatan. He retained sufficient interest, however, to work out the theoretical implications of Swedenborg's views on the spirit-world. These are explained by Professor Broad in the second part of his article. It is clear that the theory of the nature of spirit there outlined has philosophical as well as historical interest and many philosophers may be grateful for the opportunity of learning of it from Professor Broad, rather than from Kant who, as Professor Broad remarks, "lacked the art of condensation."

MARTHA KNEALE.

The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy. By ETIENNE GILSON. Translated by A. H. C. Downes. (London: Sheed and Ward. 1950. Pp. ix + 490. Price 18s. net.)

This work is a reprint of the Gifford Lectures for 1931–32, first published in English in 1936. M. Gilson has written a great deal on mediaeval philosophy since he gave the Gifford Lectures; but the volume under review remains one of his most important productions. The translation is excellent and reads very easily.

Called upon to define the spirit of mediaeval philosophy, M. Gilson found himself faced with the widespread belief that the Middle Ages possessed no philosophy. He felt, therefore, that he had to show that there was such a thing as mediaeval philosophy. But it is in the process of showing what that philosophy was that its spirit comes to light. This spirit was, according to the author, that of being a Christian philosophy. But if one says this does one not imply that the Middle Ages, though possessing a theology, possessed no philosophy? In order to answer this question one has to understand what M. Gilson means by "Christian philosophy."

By "philosophy" M. Gilson does not understand any one particular system: he means the philosophizing of the great Christian thinkers of the Patristic Age and of the Middle Ages proper; and he pays special attention to Augustine, Bonaventure, Aquinas and Duns Scotus. By "Christian philosophy" he does not mean a philosophy which employs as premisses of its arguments Christian doctrines as such. An argument based on theological premisses leads to a theological conclusion. On the other hand, the author does not mean by "Christian philosophy" a philosophy which owes nothing to Christianity but which happens to be compatible with the Christian religion. It is his con-

tention not only that the leading mediaeval philosophers philosophized in the light of Christianity but also that their Christianity, without being a formally constituent element of their philosophy, profoundly influenced its development. The mediaeval philosophers did not start from scratch; they utilized Greek philosophy in so far as it was available; but they developed it in a manner which was due to the influence of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and thus produced a "Christian philosophy." His point is that the development was a philosophical development, though its fecundating principle was the Judaeo-Christian, i.e. Biblical, tradition.

Unless one is determined to turn Plato into a Christian or to find in Aristotle ideas of which he never dreamt, one must, I think, admit that M. Gilson is fully justified in affirming the pervasive influence of the Judaeo-Christian tradition on mediaeval philosophy. The author has no difficulty, for example, in showing how reflection on the Biblical idea of God produced a natural theology which greatly developed the metaphysical theologies of Plato and Aristotle. Neither Plato nor Aristotle was in any strict sense a monotheist; and neither of them (certainly not Aristotle) had any idea of creation in the full sense. The idea of God as unique, infinite Being, on which all beings ontologically depend, was thought out in the light of Biblical teaching. Again, the Greek ethic, though utilized by a thirteenth-century thinker like Aquinas, was modified and developed in the light of Christianity. Very often old terms were used with a new meaning. And as a final example one may cite M. Gilson's account of the meaning of history for Christian mediaeval thinkers. One cannot, of course, find modern ideas of historical method and science in the mediaevals; but they were not so unhistorical in mentality as is sometimes supposed. Their Christianity forced them to attach importance to history: it did not permit them to regard it in the way that Plotinus regarded it or to adopt the old Greek idea of periodically recurrent cycles.

What is more, M. Gilson is, in my opinion, perfectly correct in drawing attention to the persistent influence of the Judaeo-Christian tradition in the classical period of modern philosophy. The ideas of God, for example, put forward by Descartes, Malebranche and Berkeley; the ethical ideas of Kant; the historical outlook of Leibniz; all these are unthinkable without the period of Christian thought which intervened between the Greek period and the Renaissance. Incidentally, Karl Jaspers, a very different type of philosopher to M. Gilson, makes much the same statement when he asserts roundly that all the great modern European philosophers (up to, he says, and even including Nietzsche) philosophized in the light of the Biblical teaching. I do not know what Jaspers would say about Hume; but his statement is substantially true.

But it is obviously possible to be in substantial agreement with M. Gilson's account of the fecundating influence exercised on mediaeval and even on much of modern philosophy by the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and yet at the same time to adopt a very different attitude towards the facts narrated. I should not myself be disposed to take very seriously the objection that if mediaeval philosophy was influenced in any positive way by Christianity it cannot have been philosophy. For philosophy, if understood in the general sense in which it is understood in histories of philosophy, has been persistently influenced by one external factor or another. And if one is not prepared to deny the name of philosophy to philosophy which has been influenced by mathematics or physics or psychology or economics, there is no adequate reason for denying it the name of philosophy simply because the external influencing factor happens to be theology. Philosophy is one element in human culture; and it is only natural that it should be influenced in the course of its development by

other elements in human culture, according to the character of the culture in question. More important, however, would be the contention that M. Gilson's lectures admirably illustrate Auguste Comte's idea of the intellectual development of humanity. There is first of all religious belief, enshrined in Scriptures which do not form a metaphysical work. Then comes the metaphysical period, the attempt to understand the data of faith; and this stage, represented by mediaeval philosophy, is prolonged into modern times. Did not Hegel start as a theological student? Finally comes the positivist or scientific stage, when the growth of the sciences has ousted philosophy from its positions one after the other. M. Gilson is a Thomist, and the positivist interpretation of the history of philosophy is, needless to say, not his interpretation. He explicitly recognizes, however, the possibility of different interpretations, though the discussion of them falls outside the scope of his book. Yet M. Gilson has given abundant evidence in his writings of his understanding of the fact that the roles of historian and philosopher cannot be entirely divorced from one another; and in the present work the philosophical position of the author, though never obtruded, should be quite clear even to the reader who does not know it beforehand. Intelligible history of philosophy (and M. Gilson's is always in the highest degree intelligible) cannot, I think, be written without a philosophical point of view. The positivist point of view depends on a philosophy: it is not a "neutral" point of view. To ask whether the positivist's or M. Gilson's interpretation and evaluation of mediaeval philosophy is the better interpretation is obviously to ask whether the philosophy of the positivist or of M. Gilson is the more adequate philosophy: it is not to propose a choice between objectivity on the one hand and subjectivity on the other.

F. C. Copleston, S.J.

Faith and Duty. By N. H. G. Robinson. (Victor Gollancz Ltd. Pp. 150. Price 12s. 6d.)

This book seems to be in some ways an important one; it will certainly be exceptionally useful to students of religious thought to-day. The author begins with an instructive survey of present trends of thought, stressing in particular the need for closer co-operation between workers in different fields and, in particular, between theologians and moral philosophers. This prepares the way for a critical discussion of influential Lutheran theologians who seem to pay insufficient heed to ethics. Barth is commended for the prominence he gives to the notion of "grace" and acknowledged to have a truly prophetic insight, but it is also shown that Barth, in his doctrine of man's "total corruption," makes an end of all ethical notions. "Total wickedness," it is urged, following John Baillie, "is a self-destroying conception." Brunner and Niebuhr appreciate this, and seek to come to terms with ethics, but the concessions they make are wholly inadequate. Brunner's view that fallen men retain the form but not the content of the divine image is shown to involve an unreal separation of form and content, and the use which Niebuhr makes of the distinction between the structure and the virtue or perfection of human nature is seen to err in the same way. Nor is Niebuhr's position redeemed by stressing the "uneasy conscience" of man, for "to add a thoroughly bad conscience to a totally corrupt being is to build one impossibility on another" (p. 70). It seems then that in spite of "a more adequate recognition of the complexities of human life and experience," Brunner and Niebuhr are only able to advance beyond the Barthian view by unplausible concessions which make their views on the whole more confused than those of Barth who has the merit of being,

if not closer to the facts of moral experience, at least more consistent in his repudiation of them.

In his discussion of Niebuhr Dr. Robinson makes the very interesting point that Niebuhr causes needless perplexity to his own readers by using the word guilt in ways that are radically opposed to the account he himself gives of guilt.

Dr. Robinson is not, however, prepared to accord to ethics a status completely independent of religion. For although he is very anxious to insist that "the insights of the ordinary moral consciousness are always, on the whole, true, so far as they go" (p. 145), he believes that they have also a "conditional and fragmentary" nature which points beyond themselves to a more absolute evaluation. The main defect which Dr. Robinson finds in secular ethics is that it only makes possible comparisons in terms of a particular virtue but does not enable us "to 'weigh' different virtues as they enter into character as a whole and in general" (p. 99). This does not merely mean that in practice the particular ethical judgments we pass are incomplete and fallible. The contention is "the much more radical one" that "even if the facts were perfectly known to us, and even if we ourselves were entirely free from all prejudice and bias, it would still be impossible to say, from the standpoint of secular ethics, that A is in an absolute sense morally better than B" (p. 105). The difficulty involved here is said to be analogous to that which confronts the Hedonist when he has to compare pleasures in respect of intensity and duration, etc. But even if we admit, as I would be rather reluctant to do, that this does present insuperable difficulties for Hedonism, there seems to me to be no serious difficulty when the comparison takes other forms. The commonest view is, in fact, that particular acts and virtues have to be considered in relation to the state of character as a whole. Others maintain, rightly in my view, that, so far as strictly moral evaluation is concerned, it is the particular acts of will alone that matter, a view which does not seem to me in the least discredited by urging, as the author does in his discussion of Tennant, that it is atomistic. And on this view Dr. Robinson's problem barely arises. But since he believes that ethical comparisons must be regarded as "adumbrations" of a more fundamental evaluation, and that ethical failures are only "symptoms" of a more "deeply seated cancerous disease," the next step must be to show how the latter must be conceived.

In answer we are offered a new and ingenious variation on the theme of "universal sin." Much though he wishes to uphold the responsibility of the individual and the imperfect comparisons of secular ethics, Dr. Robinson believes that, in another more fundamental sense, men are "collectively guilty" and "completely" sinful, a view which is held not to involve the same ill effects for ethics as the notion of "total corruption." It is admitted that in some respects the opponents of the doctrine of joint responsibility are right, for normally those who unite in a common undertaking do so for different reasons and with varying views of its nature. But Dr. Robinson rightly points out that it is possible for the various participators also to endorse one another's actions and accept the enterprise in its completeness. In such a case no one's share of responsibility would be lessened or heightened by the particular role it fell to him to play. The question then is where, if anywhere, joint undertakings of this sort may be found. They are only found imperfectly or "in approximations" so far as specific enactments are concerned, for in all such cases there are "circumstances, objective or subjective, outwith the province of the scheme" (p. 138). But the "conditions of an absolutely joint enterprise" are found in men's universal "affirmation of the world as an independent human concern." We all "acquiesce in the one world as a human

enterprise" (p. 139). This applies equally to altruistic conscientious action and to selfish action. So that "behind all the world's schemes and counter-schemes, behind all its virtue and its vice, behind the record of its various integrations and 'intrigues,' the world is all the time, and more ultimately, the single, absolutely collective enterprise of sinful and self-willed humanity" (p. 140). To the objection that the alleged acceptance of the "this-worldly organization of human life" cannot be accounted to us as sin if it is known to be a peculiarity of men everywhere at all times, Dr. Robinson answers that this would hold if the "universality" and "completeness" of sin were seen to follow from some necessity of human nature or established, if that is conceivable, empirically. But in fact, he urges, it is known solely by revelation and faith, for the more we appreciate the work of Christ the more we see that it is "throughout a mission to sinners," and "the radical nature of the cure indicates the radical nature of the disease, not only intensively in its grip upon the individual, but extensively throughout the race; and we cannot believe that so great a love and condescension can ever be rendered superfluous or redundant by the achievements of human virtue. The work of God in Jesus Christ can never come under the suspicion of involving the use of a mighty lever to lift a small and insignificant weight. The *raison d'être* of the Incarnation and the Atonement cannot be a capricious, accidental and contingent feature of man's life" (p. 131). In this way Christian faith exposes "a deeper complaint alongside which the variety of our different records in the field of self-conscious, deliberate and personal volition temporarily loses its importance" (p. 132). And if it is urged that we can hardly be held accountable for this universal complaint, the answer is that the faith which makes it known to us also affirms our responsibility for it.

Now I am sure that this will not do, notwithstanding the precautions taken to prevent the notion of universal sin from obliterating ordinary ethical distinctions, as happens in the case of Brunner or Niebuhr. On the contrary, it strongly confirms the suspicion that the desperation with which theologians cling to the notion of universal sin, in defiance of our plainest convictions, is due, not to any way that the notion appeals to them in and for itself, but because it is presupposed in a view of the work of Christ as Redeemer to which they are independently committed. But this also suggests that a more appropriate course would be to reconsider boldly those notions whose *raison d'être* has so little to commend it for itself. And one of the ways in which Dr. Robinson's work is significant is that it makes this particular need peculiarly evident. But it is important also in other, more positive ways. For the account of universal sinfulness in terms of this-worldly preoccupation suggests that what theologians really wish to preserve, in retaining the notion of universal sin, should not really be understood in an ethical sense at all but in a different more peculiarly religious sense. Dr. Robinson will certainly not have this himself. It is with sin that he claims to be dealing and he observes, very properly to my mind, that the term sin has now "an inalienable association with immorality" (p. 142). But may there not be an alienation from God which may have the most far-reaching repercussions, and which may be most disturbing of all when aggravated by moral wickedness, but which is not itself any form of moral evil? There is no objection to calling this sin provided this term be emptied, as seems to me impossible now, of all properly ethical significance. But whatever terms we use, the ethical and the religious sides of experience need to be carefully distinguished. We simply cannot be held responsible for what is believed to characterize men everywhere, whatever the source of that belief. Dr. Robinson's appeal to faith here is far too simple. But the fact that he is himself induced to think of man's alleged radical

sinfulness in terms very different from "the more or less" of ordinary ethics which he also upholds, together with the almost exclusively religious context in which the former is in fact made significant, suggests that the impasse in which theological thinking usually ends and from which there is no real hope of deliverance by further exercise of ingenuity, is to be avoided by seeking to understand better which moments of religious experience as a whole are properly ethical and which are not, and how they are related. It is not for a reviewer to suggest how this may be carried out in detail. But he may, I hope, be permitted to welcome a book with much of which he fails to agree, but which faces major theological issues so squarely and with so keen an appreciation, on the one hand, of what Barth and his followers are saying, and on the other of the ethical principles they violate, that it points the way more clearly than most theological books of recent years towards the radical reconsideration of religious conceptions which seems inevitable if religion is to survive. The author must also be thanked for much light which he throws on matters incidental to his main theme.

It is perhaps a curious reflection on the present state of theological writing that one feels tempted also to congratulate Dr. Robinson for his studious avoidance of theological obscurity and equivocations. H. D. Lewis.

Man's Freedom. A philosopher explores the approaches towards the good life for modern man. By Paul Weiss. (Yale University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. Pp. 325. Price 32s. 6d.)

This elaborate work is a successor to Professor Weiss's earlier book, *Nature and Man*. An indication of its merits may best be given by showing how the author deals with the topic which is most central to the many other questions that he raises, namely that of duty and freedom. The approach to this problem is a curious one, consisting in a reversal of most that we commonly think about it. Professor Weiss holds that we are bound to do some wrong or, as he often puts it, to decrease value, whatever we do. This can be understood in more than one way. It may be held merely that in every situation we are faced with many incompatible claims between which we must choose, but Professor Weiss gives the principle in question a remarkably wide interpretation in his insistence that "even if one gave up all he owned, he would still be guilty of failing to fulfil an infinite obligation to do good everywhere" (p. 250). Every being has some value and corresponding natural rights, and no matter how we act we are bound to trench upon some of these. "The most beneficial of acts involves the weakening or annihilation of what might be preserved or enhanced. Something must be leaned upon, utilized, consumed, restructured, subordinated, if something else is to be achieved" (p. 112), this, incidentally, being why we are told in one strange passage (p. 147) that if a man should make a meal of stones he would violate the nature of the stones as well as his own digestion. No account is taken of the various senses of doing wrong, the subjective and objective senses for example, or of the notion of "prima facie" wrongness which seems highly relevant here. Proceeding on the general unqualified principle that "it is impossible to avoid doing some wrong" (p. 112), Professor Weiss brings us straightway to his main thesis, namely that duties arise because of the need to compensate for the wrongs done in the past. We are "committed" in this way by all our actions, not in the restricted sense that our previous conduct determines what we can and should do now, but in the much more comprehensive sense that duty is wholly and essentially a matter of making amends for our past. We make such

amends by adopting a course of action in which the wrong enacted in the past can figure as an indispensable element in some process which is on balance the completest realization of value possible to us. "Present acts of choice should be forged in the light of past choosings and thus of ends to which we committed ourselves. Otherwise previously chosen alternatives will be deprived of the sanction which made them the best possible alternatives and thus the alternatives which should have been chosen. The conscientious man recommits himself to an ultimate end previously chosen. He is consistent with himself, a man who, by continuing to hold on to the ultimate end which justified previous choices, can continue to affirm that the best possible had been chosen" (p. 124). "Every act," we are told, "is justifiable" in this way by adoption of some compensating "ultimate end," and to sustain this astonishing statement recourse is had to the reflection that we can conceive of circumstances, or of a universe, in which the most injurious act is a means to greater good. The choice of Iago in ruining Othello was thus justifiable because "even if Othello were the noblest of men, deserving only joy and honour, it would be possible to justify his ruination so long as there is a possible end which makes good that reduction in value. That ultimate end perhaps could never be realized; but it is one to which a man can be committed as surely as he can to any other" (p. 114). But because Iago "produced a wrong which he could justify only in theory, never in fact," because he could not "live up" to his "ultimate end," "he forever after defined himself to be a villain." This goes for all moral evil, but it is plain that it is altogether contrary to our ordinary view, namely that, in the case of Iago for example, far from his act becoming wicked in some way subsequent to its performance, it was in itself evil as the perpetration of a wrong which could not be expected to produce a balance of good. Professor Weiss's version of this seems to me to have nothing in its favour; it confuses the main issues and cannot boast even the freshness and partial illumination one sometimes finds in paradoxical departures from common sense.

Nor is it surprising that Professor Weiss has to conclude that "conscience does not tell what is right and what is wrong." It is only "a witness to our inconsistency. It reports our failure to be conscientious, making us focus on the truth that an act of choice, once acknowledged to be right, is now unsanctioned because not supported by the ultimate end now adopted" (p. 125).

To give substance to his main thesis Professor Weiss goes on to insist that there are a number of "ultimate ends" by which our acts could be redeemed, and that all of them are of equal worth. "Unless men can freely choose among equally valuable, equally objective ultimate ends, they cannot be responsible for what they choose" (p. 117). The reason for this I am not able to fathom, and I should have thought the reverse to be the truth here also, namely that we have duties because the ends between which we have to choose have not the same worth. Nor can I follow the reasons adduced in support of Professor Weiss's view. It is urged for example that "good men can be committed to quite different ends"—Abraham and Lincoln, for instance. But the original enactments of Abraham and Lincoln were also very different, and what is required, one would suppose, is that one and the same action should admit of equally valuable compensating ends. That is how one is inclined to understand Professor Weiss in the first instance. Similarly with regard to the substance of the following passage which I quote in full, since it could not be very credibly paraphrased, as a sample of Professor Weiss's procedure:

> "He who kills a villain destroys the value which the villain has as a man. Not to kill the villain is to allow for the destruction of those things

which his villainy entails. With equal justification either alternative can be chosen. We can justifiably choose the first if we also choose an ultimate end which requires the promotion of human welfare even by destroying whatever men stand in the way. We can justifiably choose the second if we also choose an end which demands that no human life be sacrificed or human liberty restrained, even when this is to be attained by having vice rampant. The end for the first is one in which there are no villains and no effects of villainy; the end for the second is one in which villains add piquancy, when moderated so as to combine with all else, to make an excellent end."

Whatever this proves, it does not prove that it is a matter of indifference whether we kill or preserve a particular villain in a particular situation.

Support for Professor Weiss's view of freedom is also sought in the insistence that we are never confined to what appeals to us at a particular moment. Various alternatives can be reinforced or weakened by adoption of "goals," and these are in turn affected by more comprehensive goals and "ultimate ends." There is nothing very novel here. The main points have been put more simply by idealists like Green or Bradley, although there is room for stressing further, as the author does (p. 76), the inconsistencies into which we fall when our present conduct is out of accord with "goals" which we pretend to ourselves we are adopting. But what we wish to know especially is whether we are free to choose the "goals" and "ultimate ends" themselves, and how this bears on questions of responsibility and blame. On this point, in spite of much general insistence on freedom and its importance, Professor Weiss is extremely vague. He is usually content with the general insistence that, although a loving parent would normally elect to save his son, he can also prefer to kill him. "The idea," we are told, "shocks the imagination," but "for this there is no better sedative" than the story of Abraham and Isaac in the Bible. Abraham did prefer to kill his son, but he could also have preferred not to. For he could have given a less literal interpretation to the divine commandment which he made it his goal to follow, and he could have treated the words he heard as the words of a devil or a code or a hallucination; in that case there would have been no need for him to "scare the wits out of Isaac," as it is elegantly put. But what sort of "could" is involved here? Abraham could have acted differently if he had thought differently; but holding the view he did at the time, could he have done other than he did, could he have adopted a different goal except in the sense that a more (or a less) reasonable person would have done so? I find no unambiguous answer to this question in Professor Weiss's account, nor any clear indication of the meaning of "could" which he would consider adequate for ethics.

At one point we are indeed told explicitly that "It is bad logic and bad ethics then to say 'ought' necessarily implies 'can'" (p. 127). One reason adduced for this is that I could spend all my money, including some which I had borrowed, and yet remain under a permanent requirement to discharge my debt. But could I? I would certainly remain, in a rather loose, general, sense, in debt; if I came into money again I should owe it to my creditors to settle with them, and I would certainly be at fault for having contracted debts which I could not expect to discharge or for having spent money which I owed to others. But it does not seem to make sense to say that, having no money *now*, I am *now* under a *moral* obligation to pay and continue to do wrong by not discharging my debt. It seems even more absurd to contend, as the author does (p. 128), that if, in a certain situation, a man could only save the life of one of two persons attacked by a bull, he would, in respect of the

person he had not saved, be unable to "avoid the guilt which flows from a failure to bring about what he ought" (p. 128).

In spite of this we are assured in another chapter, not only (with typical perversity) that " 'can' implies 'ought'," but also roundly that " 'ought' implies 'can' " (p. 200). "The perfection which ought to be can be," "ought to be a man who does what is right" is "equivalent with 'can be a man who does what is right'." This, we are warned, is not "equivalent with 'he ought to do this right act'," the grounds adduced being that my being in debt does not mean that anyone with money should pay it. Nor is the author later deterred from asserting that " 'should,' 'would,' and 'could' are independent ideas. We criticize men for not doing what they should, even when we think it true that they neither would nor could do otherwise. We know they are flexible enough to be able to change the course of their activities, even if there is nothing they should do and even if they were not free to do it. And it is possible for them to be free to decide, even in those cases where all conditions are as they had been, and although there were nothing right or wrong for them to do. Man's freedom does not depend for its being or knowledge on ethics—just the contrary and contrary to Kant" (p. 232). We are also informed that "it is possible for men to blame themselves for what they do, not because they are free but because they have the natures they have, and lack information which they might have had and which would have led them to do something else" (p. 233). This is at variance with our plainest ethical convictions. There may be good reasons for it, but they are not provided in this book; nor is much help afforded us to iron out what seem to be downright inconsistencies in some of Professor Weiss's statements.

It is in the same vein that Professor Weiss discusses the questions of punishment, natural law, evil, the golden rule, happiness, sacrifice, love, and value. It is in respect of the latter that we are brought to the curious conclusion that interest in a rose and interest in the beauty of a rose are "both objective, public, steady, and reliable, both subjective, private, fluctuating, and unreliable" (p. 108). Attention is, indeed, often arrested by incidental observations and striking suggestions, such as that of a distinction between "logical" and "existential" absurdity (p. 210), but this is very rarely sustained in the subsequent discussion. At no point does the author seem to me to deal really helpfully with genuine difficulties, his main concern being with difficulties which appear to be mainly of his own making. One sympathizes very fully with his concern for freedom and spontaneity in our inter-relationships, for the objectivity of value, and for the need to get outside the more conventional ways of seeing things, but the arguments adduced in discussing these matters are extremely artificial and strained. I have no doubt that Professor Weiss has some important things to say, but until he shows us more precisely what they are I fear that the effect of his work will be to reduce, rather than to enhance, the already much diminished prestige of metaphysics.

In conclusion, I wonder who are the "writers in England who stake their all on the thesis that keeping one's word is absolutely right" (p. 56)? None of repute to my knowledge. H. D. Lewis.

The Spirit of Western Philosophy. By Newton P. Stallknecht and Robert S. Brumbaugh. (Longmans, Green & Co.) Pp. 540. Price $4.75.)

This is a review of philosophical thought in the West from Thales to Sartre. It starts with an introduction in which the authors aim to give some idea of what philosophers try to do. Chapter I is about the pre-Socratics whose

efforts ended in a deadlock which called for something different. Socrates provided this and in the next two chapters we are told what he did and what Plato did. The general account of this has the lively support of considerable quotation. Aristotle was the first to write a "systematic treatment of the different forms of language suited to the various uses to which it is put—logic, rhetoric and poetry." I wish there were more about Aristotle's aesthetics, Montaigne and Sartre—but there it is, in a book of this kind we cannot expect any subject to be pursued.

Chapter VI is on Hellenistic Ethics, Logic and Mysticism. At this time, the authors say, the words "philosophy" and "philosophical" take on something of the popular meaning that they have ever since carried in general literature. A philosophy is recognized as "a set of maxims to steady and support the human spirit against the pressures of a threatening, a frustrating or an uncongenial world."

Chapter VII is on Christianity and philosophical thought in the Middle Ages. There follow chapters on Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, the last hundred years of philosophy, moral philosophy in the modern period, a good chapter on contemporary logic, a bibliography and an index.

It seems to me that this book is well done. It may be a dangerous kind of book because it may encourage that habit of trying to skim the cream and get good without wasting time on non-essentials which menaces our minds to-day. But I confess I enjoyed it. The thoughts are set there vividly and their connections brought out. The quotations are a great help in bringing the philosophers of the past upon the scene. JOHN WISDOM.

A History of Philosophical Systems. Edited by VERGILIUS FERM. (New York: The Philosophical Library. Pp. 642. Price $6.00.)

This book is a general survey of the history of philosophy. There are 47 chapters by 41 authors, mostly American, each dealing with one period, school of thought, or topic of study. About half of the chapters deal with schools and periods ranging from the Vedas to the nineteenth century; the remainder are concerned with movements of thought which are still flourishing. The book does not attempt to be an encyclopaedic work of reference; and it is not very effective in tracing the general trends of the long continuous argument called "philosophy," or relating these trends to historical conditions. What it provides is a series of self-contained sketches covering between them most of what is important in philosophy.

The book does not avoid the usual difficulties of works by various hands. The contributions are uneven in quality; they make unequal demands on knowledge of philosophical theories and terminology; there is no consecutiveness, and some overlapping (e.g. there are separate chapters on Philosophy of the Sciences, Recent Schools of Logic, Recent Epistemological Schools, Pragmatism, Logical Positivism. Some contributions are of the catalogue type: others, to my mind more usefully, concentrate on expounding a few central principles of the philosophies they deal with.

On a scale which allows Descartes, Spinoza, Hobbes and Leibniz eleven pages between them, it is not possible to give more than an introduction to a given group of philosophers. Professors Veatch on Aristotelianism, Morgan on Early Modern Empiricism, Frankel on the Philosophy of the Enlightenment, Mackay on Pragmatism, and (so far as my ignorance allows me to judge) Cairns on Phenomenology have done their jobs very well.

There are bibliographies to each chapter. C. H. WHITELEY.

NEW BOOKS

Journey through Utopia. By MARIE LOUISE BERNARI. (London 1950. Pp. xi + 339. Price 16s.)

The writer of this book died in 1949, full of promise, at the age of thirty-one. The book describes numerous plans of the ideal society, the long progeny of Plato's *Republic* through the ages. Besides the better known schemes of More, Campanella, Winstanley and Morris the author has retrieved some forgotten Utopias of the past, Andreae's *Christianopolis*, de Fogny's *La Terre Australe*, Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* and Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. There is a remarkable omission of German ideal republics, such as those of Grimmelshausen, Novalis, Fichte and Hauptmann.

Miss Bernari's pictures of Utopias, supported by long extracts from her writers, are lively. Throughout she directs attention to the authoritarian regulations of the governors of these perfect states, the guardians, phylarchs and samurai. The detailed codes for personal relations and state service, the symmetrical division of functions, the imposed beliefs, disgust her generous mind. Her distaste for uniformity and state-control leads her into injustice towards Plato who is described as the greatest exponent of totalitarianism. But many interesting proposals are brought out in her survey. When we reach the industrial age the plans become more mechanistic and "there are few utopias of the nineteenth century which can be read to-day without a feeling of utter boredom." Bellamy's *Looking Backward* carries the system of universal conscription to the most extreme limit. William Morris's *News from Nowhere* is a blissful contrast to these reticulated schemes. He alone in the period did not assume an unbounded faith in the wisdom of experts nor a blind confidence in technical progress. The book ends with accounts of the bitter anti-utopian visions of Zamyatin and Aldous Huxley.

M. H. CARRÉ.

Books also received:

WILLIAM H. KILPATRICK, Editor. *The Education of Man; Aphorisms by Heinrich Pestalozzi.* New York Philosophical Library. 1951. Pp. xii + 93. $2.75.

W. H. V. READE. *The Christian Challenge to Philosophy.* London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 1951. Pp. xi + 194. 13s. 6d.

EDMUND W. SINNOTT. *Cell and Psyche* (The MacNair Lectures). Chapel Hill: University of N. Carolina Press (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1951. Pp. 121. 16s.

THOMAS ENGLISH HILL. *Contemporary Ethical Theories.* New York: The Macmillan Company. 1951. Pp. xii + 368. 30s.

JOSEPH NEEDHAM. *Human Law and the Laws of Nature in China and the West.* L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture, No. 20, 1950. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1951. Pp. 44. 2s. 6d.

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA. *Ramakrishna: Prophet of New India.* With a Foreword by Aldous Huxley. London: Rider & Co. 1951. Pp. xi + 389. 21s.

MANLY PALMER HALL. *Self-Unfoldment by Disciplines of Realization.* London: Rider & Co. 1951. Pp. 159. 15s.

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MAURICE MAETERLINCK. *The Great Beyond.* London: Rider & Co. 1951. Pp. 164. 10s. 6d.

HUGH W. SANDFORD. *Philosophy Leading up to Marxism.* Tennessee: Hugh W. Sandford. 1950. Pp. 40. 25c.

HUGH W. SANDFORD. *A Major Premise of Albert Einstein: Correct or Incorrect?* Tennessee: H. W. Sandford. 1950. Pp. 178. No price stated.

DALLAS KENMARE. *Stolen Fire: A Study of Genius.* London: Williams & Norgate, Ltd. 1951. Pp. 152. 8s. 6d.

HADLEY CANTRILL. *The "Why" of Man's Experience.* London: Macmillan & Co. 1951. Pp. xi + 198. 20s.

D. J. MCCRACKEN. *Thinking and Valuing.* London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 1951. Pp. viii + 236. 15s.

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CHARLES MAYER. *Man: Mind or Matter?* (Trans. H. A. Larrabee). The Beacon Press, Boston, Mass. 1951. Pp. xx + 168. $2.50.

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NOTE

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